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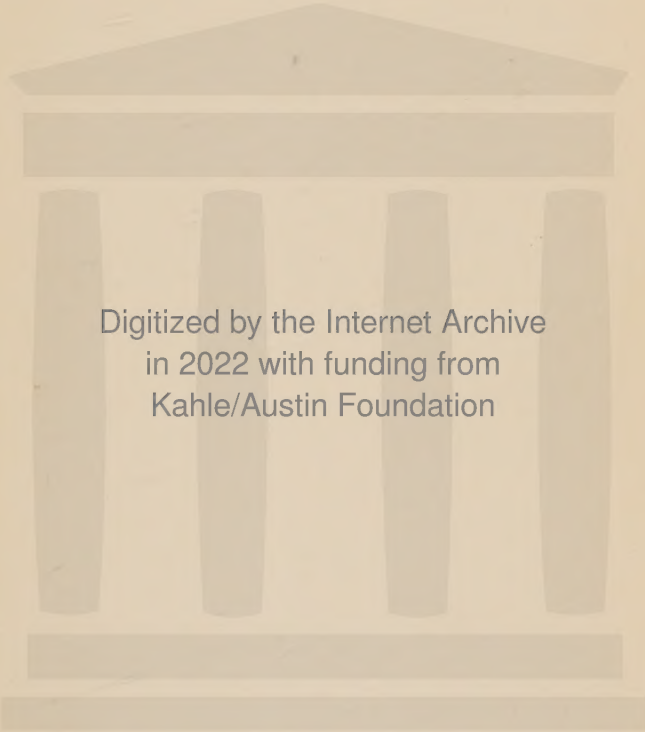
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THE CIRCUS
MENAGERIE

Books by Edwin P. Norwood

DAVY WINKLE IN CIRCUSLAND
THE ADVENTURES OF DIGGELDY DAN
IN THE LAND OF DIGGELDY DAN
THE FRIENDS OF DIGGELDY DAN
THE OTHER SIDE OF THE CIRCUS
THE CIRCUS MENAGERIE



Edwin P. Norwood permits an interested friend to read "over his shoulder."



"Nothing pleased him more than to untie a friend's shoe lace."

THE CIRCUS MENAGERIE

BY
EDWIN P. NORWOOD



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1929



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To
CARRIE L. CRAIG

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THE CIRCUS
MENAGERIE



"And not go till I give him something for eat."



*"Like some old two-leg ruminant handling an extra large chew of
New Orleans twist."*

THE CIRCUS MENAGERIE

CHAPTER I

THE SPOTTED GIRLS

OLD ANDREW," the giraffe keeper with the big show, opened his eyes, and concluding that the light which seeped in through the menagerie roof meant that the sun had once more pushed itself out of Lake Michigan, decided to get up. Having made this decision he swung himself from his cot and using its edge for a seat, began to dress with obvious leisure.

To be a circus man and yet dress with leisure is a rare privilege; especially to one nearing seventy and who has trouped for fifty years and more.

The rule is otherwise: Mostly the route consists of one-day stands—here to-day, there to-morrow, with night after night spent on the circus trains. You pulled into a town when it was still black night, "got up in a tunnel" as the saying has it, and were off for the lot. If you were Andrew, you followed the rumbling wagons that housed the giraffes, and once these dens were inside the menagerie tent you

unlashed the sections of heavy steel mesh from the sides of the wagons, set them up to form a corral, and then coaxed your lank-legged charges out of the wagons and into the inclosure.

But now and then came a longer stand; Philadelphia, Brooklyn, or Boston, perhaps, each played for a week. Again, as was the case on this particular morning in July, you found yourself in Chicago, with the huge gray tents sprawled pretty as a picture on the Lake Front lot—four days showed and five to go.

Few bedrooms could have been stranger than that in which Andrew now sat dressing himself. Its longer walls were formed by the sides of the wagons in which the giraffes were carried on their journeys from town to town. Across the ends of this miniature canyon with its walls of glowing red paint tarpaulins had been draped. A scattering of straw served as a carpet and for clothes hooks those iron brackets in which the corral sections rested when the menagerie was loaded came to handy use.

There was no roof, unless one accepted that of the menagerie itself which sheltered all beneath it. But the immediate top of Andrew's odd bed chamber was quite open; a convenience which at this moment permitted Annie of the giraffe herd to thrust her neck across the top of the near-by corral and gaze down upon her keeper.

With Andrew's waking other things wakened. A crow that had before stood hunched on one of the wagon wheels that protruded into the room now began preening himself. A rabbit hopped from under one of the dens and then hopped back again. An ocelot tethered by a chain to one of the spokes blinked sleepily from the foot of the bed; while a goat that lay partly concealed under the head of the cot fluttered its lips and shook its head vigorously.

Andrew raised himself and looked from one to the other of these several companions. They constituted his own special menagerie—a menagerie within a menagerie.

"All want eat," he said, half aloud. "I never see beat—all time eat, eat, eat."

He bent down, groped under the wagon, and drew out the rabbit.

"I guess I got go find you some nice fresh grass, yah? Or maybe beg carrot from monk cage, eh? All time trouble! All time trouble!"

He placed the rabbit on the pillow which he had but lately left and returned to his shoe lace.

"Leedle devil," he added, "you stay there. Then bye-bye I go get grass."

Meanwhile a boy who seemed as much in a hurry as Andrew was deliberate had got off a train at the Dearborn Street station, made a hasty breakfast

at the depot lunch counter, and was now directing his steps toward the Lake Front lot. Indeed, if this account is to be kept precise, he had crossed Michigan Boulevard and traversed the Seventh Street bridge just as Andrew was leaving the menagerie tent by one of those short cuts known to circus men as "ducking under the side wall." And so it came about that the two met at the edge of the lot.

It was the boy who recognized the man.

"Oh, Mr. Zingraher!" he called.

"Yah! My name is that—Andrew Zingraher."

"Guess maybe you wouldn't remember me," the boy said. "I'm John Foster and once you let me water Annie and Louisa."

For a moment Old Andrew's grizzled brows contracted in a frown. Then he smiled.

"Oh, yah! Yah! Sure, I remember. And you remember my spotted girls, eh?"

"I should say I do. And the goat, too—the one that liked bananas. Have you got him still?"

"Yah! Yah! Still got. But I t'ink maybe I kill him pretty quick now. Keep me all time broke buying bananas."

John smiled inwardly. He recalled that Old Andrew was always threatening to kill those pets of which he was fondest.

"What you do here?" Andrew asked as they walked along together. "You live Chicago now?"

"Oh, no; only you not showing our town this year I thought I'd come down to visit. That is if it will be all right."

"Sure be all right. First I get grass for leedle rabbit devil, then we go back to menagerie. I got Fritzie now and I got George, too," he announced as he stooped down to pluck a handful of long green spears.

John helped with the chore.

"More rabbits?" he asked.

"Naw! No rabbits!" Andrew laughed. "Two leedle long legs. Like Annie and Louisa, only punkies. Boy giraffes. Come, you see."

Their pockets now stuffed with grass, Andrew led the way toward the tent that housed the big show's animals.

Few places afford a more ideal vantage point from which to view the canvas panorama than the approach to Chicago's Lake Front lot. For here in Grant Park the background is a combination of sky and lake, the two blending to silhouette the whole in fine relief. Thus the outline of the menagerie was unusually distinct, even to the main and lesser guys that ran upward from the ground to the ringed collars of the center poles. Adjoining it and hyphenated by the connection rose the still mightier big top, the brow of its ridge penetrated by the stalwart centers that thrust their blunt blue noses

into clearness of the morning sky. Beyond lay the back yard, the pad room, and the clustering dressing tents; and farther afield—John could see the smoke curling from the steam boiler wagon—the cook house, and yet more distant, the big horse tents sheltering the baggage stock.

Recalling what he had been told on his first visit to the big show, John guessed that this was what Happy Jack Snellen would have termed a string-bean layout—everything strung more or less in a row. He remembered——

But he and Andrew had reached the menagerie stake line and now passed under the side wall and into the cat house. John involuntarily thought of it by that name. It was what the animal men called the menagerie.

During Andrew's absence other keepers had awakened: Cat men, cameleers, elephant men, zebra grooms. Everywhere men and animals were shaking themselves into action.

John and his guide crossed toward the giraffe corral.

"Only not fast," Andrew cautioned. "We go slow this way around the vagoons. You see Louisee like goose. There—she still asleep!"

John peered around one corner of a giraffe den to see the largest of the animals still down in the straw of the inclosure. Her front legs—at least

from knees to hoofs—were bent under and back. Not beneath the body as with a camel, but laid at one side after the habit of a cow. The hind legs—likewise folded along the side—came forward so that the hoofs extended beyond the bent knees of the forelegs. This caused the ham of the right hind leg to form an elongated pillow. Midway along the ham, her neck bent back in a curve fully as acute as a horseshoe, lay Louisa's head.

"See," chuckled Andrew, "she puts nose 'way back—just like goose puts head by wing. That good t'ing for you to see. Not many people ever see giraffe sleep."

But now, as they left their hiding place and Andrew spoke to her, Louisa's head and neck swung around and upward with almost the speed with which John had seen a canary withdraw its head from its wing.

"Sometimes head don't hold good and slips down," Andrew said. "That wakes him up and he puts it high up again. Naw, Louisee he don't always sleep late. Most up early like rest. Now we feed leedle rabbit devil and then I introduce you to George and Fritzie."

He pulled the tarpaulined end of the bedroom to one side. They entered to find the brown sage bunny still on the pillow. Andrew gathered him up, placed him on the ground and gave him some grass.

"This plenty for him," he said to John. "You keep yours for make George do stunt."

"Do you sleep here every night?" John asked.

"Oh, yah. Always in week stands. And spotted girls sleep out there. Except maybe bad storm come in night. Then I get up and put them in the vagoons. But no bum weather yet. Nice all time."

Once more beside the corral John saw that it was divided into three parts—Annie in one, Louisa in another, and in the last section the two babies.

The youngsters, both several heads taller than Andrew, were at the back of the corral but when he called to them George responded immediately.

"George smart," Andrew declared, "but Fritzie—vell, he nice but he don't know much. Just dumb-bell. We squat down now."

Andrew sat on his heels at the bottom of the corral and John followed suit.

"Now grass. You put him close against straw down near ground here. Come, George! Come, George!" Andrew called up.

George's first response was to try for the handful of grass by dipping his head. But it was far out of reach.

"Come, George! Down, George!" Andrew coaxed.

Then with wiggling ears and eyes that never left the grass that John was holding, the giraffe began

spreading his front legs. Gradually, and propelled by short jerks, the hoofs slid to right and left. As the head approached the ground John noted that the back knees were held close together. This kept the body in balance while the forward part sank slowly downward. Lower and lower George came until the spread between his front hoofs was even greater than the length of either foreleg. Then his long tongue grasped the grass.

"Nice Georgel!" Andrew applauded. "Now I get you biscuit. Naw, Fritzie not do t'ing like that," he answered as he went to a sack at the end of his bedroom. "I never had any do that only George. Oh, yah, they all could only they don't like spraddle out. George jig, too."

Andrew waved the hand that held the forage biscuit from side to side and George, who had now regained his usual footing, hopped along the corral with steps that carried his hoofs a full six inches off the ground.

"I like train George for drive in cart on hippodrome track, and do jig and splits on stage," Andrew confided. "Yah, sure; I t'ink he do it fine. Yesterday I take him out for picture and lead him by rope like cow. Every once while he stop and not go till I give him something for eat."

"Gee! That would be a great act all right," John exclaimed.

Andrew shrugged.

"Maybe never do, though," he said. "I t'ink Meester John he t'ink too risky. Giraffe cost too much for take chance for bum leg."

"How much do they cost, Mr. Zingraher?"

"I not know for sure but I t'ink George maybe ten thousand dollar and Fritzie seven. Annie and Louisee worth much more—I guess maybe all together worth fifty thousand dollar."

John whistled. He could imagine his Uncle Jack, who was always turning things like that into percentages, figuring out the income a fellow would have from such a sum.

Andrew now began forking hay into the feed boxes that were strapped to the top of the corral. Interested as George was in this procedure which meant additional breakfast, John saw him suddenly prick up his ears and stride to the rear side of the paddock.

From somewhere down the menagerie tent came a voice calling, "Hi! there, George! What do you say?"

George started to jig and Andrew lowered the hay fork.

"See, he know his name all right," he said. "That's Ben. Ben always bring George something for eat."

The one called Ben came up—a heavy shouldered, sun-tanned man with half-gray hair. He nodded to Andrew and John and then held out a hand filled with bits of broken cracker which he dug from a coat pocket. Gradually he lowered his hand down the outer side of the corral. Again George spraddled but this time he came down much faster than before.

“He like cracker better than grass,” Andrew laughed. “Vell, I go breakfast now. You been breakfast?”

“Oh, yes, thank you,” John said. “I ate at the station.”

“You couldn’t get Andrew to eat before he’d fed the spotted girls and boys and that private zoo of his,” the newcomer remarked as Andrew moved off. “You’re a friend of his?”

“We got acquainted when I visited a couple of years ago,” John said. “Willie Carr let me——”

“Oh, yes,” the other nodded, “I remember. You’re the lad that worked for Jim Whalen on canvas and blew the whistle for the statue acts. What’s in the wind this time?” he added as he gave George the last of the crackers.

“Well, it seemed to me there must be a whole lot to find out about the animals that I didn’t get that other time.”

“And so you’ve decided to do a little excavating,

eh?" Ben said. He took out an extremely black pipe, filled and lighted it.

"Did Andrew pull his little joke on you about the length of a giraffe's legs? Then come on back a few steps. Here—this puts us broadside to Annie. Now which would you say were the longer, the front stilts or the aft ones?"

"The front ones, of course," John answered quickly.

Ben shook his head.

"Guess again, only this time put up your hand so as to shut out everything but the legs themselves."

"Why, they're just the same!"

"Certainly they are. The trouble is that when you take a snapshot look the sloping back line and the high foreshoulders make for an optical illusion. 'Most everybody gets fooled. Just as you might suppose that with a neck like that there ought to be a whole raft of vertebræ. But there's just seven, the same as in the general run of mammals; only a whole lot longer ones."

"Some tongue," John said, as Louisa ran hers along the corral top.

"And how," Ben rejoined. "Here, let me show you."

He dug into the bag that Andrew had visited, got out a biscuit and broke it in half. They went to Louisa's end of the corral where with a part of the

biscuit in one palm Ben induced her to lower her neck and head over the side. Having reached as far as her neck would permit, Louisa thrust out her tongue to what John judged to be a distance of ten inches. He saw the broad end grow narrow and then with a curling twist gather up the biscuit.

"But wait," Ben admonished, "you haven't seen anything yet. That is if we can get her to do it."

From his vest pocket he took a pinch of salt which he cupped in the hollow of one hand. Then removing a ring from his finger he held the ring between the thumb and forefinger but above the salt.

Down came Louisa's head and out came her tongue. At first she attempted to get at the salt by weaving the tongue tip along the edge of Ben's hand. But he tightened his fingers and so left the opening in the ring as the only means of reaching it.

"Now!" he said. "Watch close."

John saw the tongue gradually narrowing at the tip—narrower and narrower as taffy narrows when it is pulled. And when it had been reduced to the smallness of a lead pencil it passed down through the ring!

"Not much that a giraffe can't do with its tongue," Ben declared as he let Louisa lick the palm of his hand, "as, for example, when Andrew

has foraged for a few choice bits of tree foliage and tied them to the sky mangers. You'll see a tongue snake in, select a single leaf, nip it off, and pull it into the mouth. Which, of course, is why the books tell about the giraffe having a prehensile tongue."

"I suppose it is as important to a giraffe as a prehensile tail is to a monkey," John ventured.

"Three or four times more so. With the spotted boys and girls that tongue is a complete kit of tools all rolled into one—knife, fork, spoon, and comb and brush. I've got no data on the number of muscles in the thing but—— Ever see a cross section of an elephant's trunk?" Ben broke off suddenly.

John said he never had.

"I saw one once when some college chaps came up to the old Bridgeport winter quarters to cut up a dead bull," Ben went on, "and the whole thing is made up of practically nothing but muscles running every thundering way imaginable. If I remember right, the total in the trunk was later estimated at fifty thousand. That being the case it seems to me we might guess that there were a fourth that number in a giraffe's tongue."

They seated themselves on the runway that sloped groundward from one of the open giraffe wagons. As they talked Louisa, having finished her breakfast, stood in the corner of the corral nearest them. With neck erect and her lower jaw grinding

in a half-rotary motion she eyed them with peaceful satisfaction.

"She likes company," Ben commented, "just as all of them do. If you and I were to go to the opposite side of the corral and sit down there you'd see them all shift so as to be nearer us. And though it may not be quite the thing to say about a lady, Louisa is to my eye a tough mug. Pipe her now!"

The full lower lip slipping as it did from right to left as Louisa chewed the cud indeed suggested a most grotesque countenance.

"If that isn't exactly like some old two-leg ruminant handling an extra large chew of New Orleans twist then I don't want a cent. And while I'm not pretending to tell anything about actual ruminants to a lad who's met as many cows as you probably have, there's nothing like a giraffe for a subject when it comes to studying the up-swallow. Watch this next riser."

For several seconds Louisa's face had been in complete repose. Now, along the under side of the throat they saw the climbing ripple that marked the ascent from stomach to mouth of a portion of the recently swallowed but hastily chewed hay. With its arrival Louisa's grinders started working again.

"There," declared Ben, "you've got the longest and the steepest food elevator known to man."

"I wonder what makes the cud go up?" John asked.

"They tell me it's a good deal like when a fellow has the hiccoughs," Ben answered. "Next time you get them try putting your hands along your belt and feel the jerk of the diaphragm. It's with a similar jerk that a ruminant sends a hunk of food upward. That being agreed what I say is that here before us we have the animal with the strongest hiccoughing machinery extant. For at a guess I'd say that cud has to be shot a good eight feet."

"But there's no sound," John pointed out.

"No more than there would be to human hiccoughs if us two-legs were as mute as a giraffe."

"Of course," John said, "they haven't any voice. I'd forgotten about that for the second. Andrew says he's never heard one make a sound; not even dying ones."

"Sick or well, young or old, they're always voiceless," Ben nodded. "And I've often wondered if it isn't that lack that makes their eyes so blamed expressive? Just a guess, of course, but the longer you study them the more you're likely to conclude that besides wearing the prettiest eyes, the spotted girls have the talkingest ones in the menagerie. What do you say if we mosey over toward the humps?"



"Jack pulled a hefty wheel in the now historic sixteen team."



"Among the most supercilious of anything in hair or feathers."

CHAPTER II

THE HUMPS

STRETCHED down the center of the menagerie tent and made fast to rows of stakes lined perpendicularly to the broadside of the giraffe corral were two picket ropes. Along one of these ranged the zebras while the other served to tether the camels.

"It's the conventional way of laying out a menagerie that's been followed for better than fifty years," Ben said. "The cages and the elephant line always form the outer oval, with the led stock—meaning the humps and the convicts—strung down the middle."

They stopped in front of the camel squad.

"Now then," he went on, "to get your excavating tools working, call these dromedaries, or camels, or humps, or whatever you're a mind to; but what I want to have spilled in my ears is: Why we're now looking at a connecting link between the ruminant and the elephant? Or, to give you a working plan, take old Carroll here."

With a thrust of his pipe stem Ben indicated one of the largest camels in the herd.

"Look her over carefully, then go and examine that Albert elephant across the way and tell me what it is that is pretty much alike in both of them."

John set to work, first walking around Carroll and then inspecting Albert.

"Their backs hump a little alike," he said finally.

"No doubt about it," nodded Ben. "Likewise they both have tails and if I'm counting correctly, sprout four legs apiece. But come along—shovel a little deeper down. Give us something of real value to science."

"I've got it. The feet!"

"Right as a fellow with his left arm off," approved Ben. "For it's the fact that a camel's feet don't rest on sure-enough hoofs but on those elastic pads set under and around the toes that makes for the hook-up between it and the elephant. And so far as I know he's in that respect the only connecting link between the cud chewers and the thick skins. But don't you feel foolish over not knowing the answer right off the bat. Older heads than yours have had to be educated."

Ben smiled in recollection.

"I'll not name the town for I'm guessing that it's still a sore subject; but one fall when we were touring in the southwest a considerable amount of foot and mouth disease broke out in the cattle country. In the face of it there was nothing to do, if the show

wanted to keep trouping and not get quarantined, but to ship the split hoofs like the deer, antelope, and the spotted girls back to winter quarters before entering the infested territory. However, that done we followed our billing.

"Everything was mild and merry until one morning we pulled into a small stand to find the local veterinary down at the railroad yards. He'd come bringing blood in his eye and a whole flock of badged-up constables at his heels.

" 'You can't unload here,' he announced.

" 'Why not?' asked Frank Cook, the legal adjuster who'd come up to see what all the row was about.

" 'Got a carload of camels with you!' piped one of the constables exactly as though he'd Hawkshawed the perfect crime, 'and don't you try to deny it!'

" 'I don't,' Frank answered. 'We've got eighteen or twenty. But what of it?'

" 'What of it!' exploded the vet. 'You ain't tryin' to tell me you're unfamiliar with the rulin' coverin' split-hoof stock?'

" 'My dear doctor,' soothed Frank. 'Come hither with me and I'll give you a lesson in zoölogy.'

"He led the way to the camel car where he and the vet and the law climbed aboard.

" 'Scientists tell us,' Frank was saying a few min-

utes later as he kicked the straw away from a camel's underpinning, 'that perhaps the only survivor among ruminants in which the organ of locomotion is fitted with lateral plates is the cam——'

"But the doc and his army had fled.

"Just the same," Ben concluded, "there are a lot of folks who, should you suddenly put the question, would tell you that a camel has hoofs like a cow. Further than that—to get back to that remark that you made a while ago about the spine humping a bit similar to the elephant's—we now and then draw menagerie visitors who suppose a camel's backbone must be shaped like some of the plumbing you've seen under the old home sink. But the fact is that it's as straight as in the average quadruped. Not a single bone in the humps, at least in none of those I've seen dissected. Strange arrangements, those humps—all fat and gristle with a tube something like a windpipe running to the peak, but having nothing whatever to do with the backbone."

"Some of the humps fall over," John observed.

"There's a theory that when a camel is not scoffing regularly or has gone shy of water for too long a time, he draws on the hump through the tube and that causes it to droop. Which seems reasonable enough. But just the same the thing once in a while happens with ours and they are fed and watered as often as they want. So it's a surmise on my part that

some illness that we don't know anything about will be equally as apt to tip the hump. Or it may be that old age will do it.

"Speaking of veterans Jack over there is the oldest. In the days of street parades that Jack camel pulled a hefty wheel in the now historic sixteen team. But he's the only one left of the original outfit. Painted a lot of pictures in his day, has Jack."

"Painted pictures!" John exclaimed.

Ben's eyes twinkled.

"There's a poser you can hand them when you go home: How many pictures can a camel paint? The answer is that before the show began wintering at Sarasota, Florida, a fellow used to come down to the Bridgeport camel barn from New York to get the longest tufts. The trouble was, he said, that pretty nearly all so-called camel-hair brushes used for water coloring are made from squirrel tails. But he was after the real stuff. Now Jack being the oldest it's likely that he furnished the most material and so has the biggest number of pictures to his credit."

"Funny that they'd shed in winter," John said.

"Well, most of them wouldn't start until spring was no great shakes away. Still there were always exceptions, like Jack and Carroll. I never could figure Carroll. She'd start to drop her coat in November and by Christmas when most folks were go-

ing around in ulsters she would often be rolling in the corral with nothing on her but her skin and a strap halter!"

"Right out in the snow!"

"With it a foot deep," declared Ben. "To see the still shaggy ones padding across a crust-covered yard you'd think you were glimpsing the Sahara. Camels like snow and it's good for them. Monkeys that are handled in the same way—that is, allowed to go into a compartment opening into cold air—are better off than when caged in a heated barn. Only, of course, you've got to provide a warm place for them to go back to. And differing from us two-legs a camel or a monk always has sense enough to come in out of the weather when he's had enough of it."

A camel at the end of the line had begun to roll on its side.

"That's Tiger," Ben said. "But he can't turn over as a horse can. No camel ever does. And yet the boys tell me that's a question that is put to them almost every day. Folks stand around watching them and then somebody will want to know if they can roll over. You'd think it would be easy enough to see why they couldn't with all that hump to negotiate."

"But while Tiger's down we've got a fine chance to see what Charlie Smith who used to have the

menagerie always dubbed the fifth wheel. There—get that heart-shaped calloused patch in the fork between the two front legs? All of them have it and it's on that, together with the legs, that a camel rests the forepart of his body when he comes to the ground. I remember seeing the jigger laid open when Old Monty died and Tom James came up to the quarters from Peabody Institute to take the body for mounting. The thing—Tom called it the pedestal—was a good deal like a barrel in shape and ran up into the body for perhaps eight inches; all fat and gristle."

"Tiger's a funny name for a camel," John remarked.

"All the more so," Ben assented, "when you consider that though a stud and the strongest animal in the herd, Tiger is likewise the gentlest. But there's never any telling what the family circle moniker may be around a cat house. Yet there's always a trace-back if you dig for it. As in the case of Tiger, there. A little while before he was born a new cameleer was hired out. He came to work wearing a silk shirt that blossomed stripes as wide as that picket rope; and so it wasn't two hours before the boss was calling him 'Tiger.' Then a few days later, he being elected nurse maid to the camel calf, the same name got hung onto the baby."

"I saw Louis all dressed up for the pageant when

I was here last time," John recalled, "and a man was telling me he was named that because he was born in St. Louis."

"Most of our home-grown camels are named for towns when they're born on tour; or after the boys who tend them if they happen to arrive at winter quarters. I suppose that is because we don't consider them of special importance. On the other hand, notice the four just here to our left? All of them were imported. And what's their names? Prophet, Muffa, Ali Bey, and Pasha. Which goes to show that a hump is quite a fellow on his own home desert."

"But not all camels come from the desert countries, do they?" John asked.

"Not by several thousand lopes. Czarina, who stands just beyond Prophet, hails from Siberia. She's a double-hump, or Bactrian, while Prophet is a one-hump or Arabian. You'll observe that she is the stouter in build and the shaggier of the two. A chap who brought some animals across for the show one spring was telling me that there are pack camels like Czarina that work on the Russian steppes with nothing to eat but salt and a sort of bitter plant that no sane horse would so much as smell at. The fact is, however, that the whole herd would a good deal rather have thistles than hay. But you can't blame the show for dodging an appetite like

that. Paint yourself a picture of Willie Carr sidling up to a feed man and putting in an order for a dozen bales of nice rough thistles."

John snickered.

"Still, the old humps certainly are keen for the stickery stuff. Take them out to the edge of a lot such as we'll sometimes find on the outskirts of a small show stand, and if there are thistles in sight the thistles will be gobbled first and the grass left until last.

"But then," Ben added with a wink as he and John walked away, "I'm told that every camel has four stomachs so I suppose it's his privilege to jam one of them with thistles if he wants to."

CHAPTER III

OLD RAIN-ON-THE-ROOF

STAND still a second," Ben suggested as he and John passed down the menagerie track. "Hear that noise like rain on a tin roof?"

John listened and nodded.

"Now peer across there to the polar bear cage and you'll see who's guilty of the imitation. It's Old Deacon's claws rattling on the tin floor of his den as he sluffs back and forth."

They went nearer and as they did the big white-coated bruin paused, thrust his black nose between two bars, and rolled his liver-colored eyes. But a moment later he was again parading over the tin floor.

"I call him Old Rain-on-the-Roof," Ben laughed, "though of course any bear would make the same noise with metal under him. Notice how the tips of his claws are worn off? There are two reasons for that. In the first place the whole sole of a bear's foot sets flat on the ground. And in the second place—differing from a lion or a tiger or any

kind of a cat—the bear can't draw his claws into his foot. So as he sluffs along the claw tips are being constantly ground down."

By now Old Deacon had sunk into a corner where he sat as though to inspect his visitors.

"Good boy," Ben applauded. "Just what we wanted. Now you can see how flatfooted he is, and appreciate why a polar bear is always the champion among trained animals when it comes to shooting the chutes. Also if you look close you'll notice something that under-soles the old boy and which no amount of tramping or sliding ever seems to entirely wear off."

"Hair!" John exclaimed.

"Right as a heavyweight champ. Small bristles on the pads. Know why they're there?"

"Give up," John whistled. "I'd never guess that in a thousand years."

"Neither did I, if that's any consolation," Ben admitted. "But what you see are the remnants of Deacon's hobnailed shoes used when he was hoofing it over the ice fields instead of pattering around a circus wagon. I say remnants because originally it was thick and pretty much like fur and so kept him from slipping. Also, according to a chap that was once with the show and who used to trap for Carl Hagenbeck, it at times actually freezes the polar to a fixed spot if he happens to decide on a

joy ride via the iceberg route. Now, nobody will deny that ice is cold and that a bear's foot is warm. A foot the size of Deacon's would spread over a fair amount of surface, and being perfectly flat it would turn loose quite a bit of heat. This heat would melt just enough ice to let the underhair sink in and then after a little, freeze tight again. Result, every polar bear his own glue pot—he'd stick."

"Gee! I wonder if that's a sure-enough fact?" John questioned.

"I'm merely passing it along as it was told to me," Ben shrugged. "Take it or leave it. Certain it is that the polars frequently go visiting in the Arctic by climbing on an iceberg and being carried for hundreds of miles along the polar currents. Since we know that to be a fact it seems likely that on such occasions Nature might provide extra means toward helping her northern tourists guy themselves down."

"Do these in the menagerie ever get ice?" John asked.

"Nary a pound of ice. An open cage makes them comfortable enough. Besides, once away from the Arctic their coats thin down to suit the change in temperature. And I'll tell you another thing, which is that on a rip-sizzling day out in the corn belt a lion or a tiger will feel the heat far more than a polar bear."

"I've read that there is a cream-colored kind as well as the pure white ones," John said.

"The fact is that the majority are more cream than white," Ben replied, "though the cubs of either variety are always snow white at the start. But for a real novelty you should see a nice red polar. We had a couple for a month or so right here in this same menagerie. Absolutely the only red polar bears in captivity.

"But before going into that bit of un-natural history I should tell you that our polars are never bedded on straw but always on sawdust. And it must be white dust—like, say, the sawings from white pine. In fact, given plenty of that in which to sleep, play and roll and you never have to hose a polar with water. You've seen a jeweler take a tarnished gold ring, put it in a box of sawdust and shake it up? And noticed how bright and shiny it was when it came out? The same thing follows with a polar bear. Wallowing in it polishes him up as pretty as a snowman.

"But once out west a new wood and coal dealer got things mixed. Two big bags of dust ordered by the twenty-four-hour agent arrived O. K. and were left outside the menagerie. As luck would have it there also happened to be a new man on the polar cages. He cleaned out the dens, dumped in the fresh sawdust and the bears started to roll. Then

they somehow spilled their water pans and rolled some more. Well, sir, by the time the boss got around to inspect things that pair of Arctic natives were as red as a couple of Injuns painted up for a scalping party. Like as not you've guessed why: they'd been handed redwood sawdust! They finally bleached out of it but they surely were the cat house clowns for the next several weeks.

"A bear's just naturally comical under any circumstances," Ben declared. "The show once had a bill calling them 'Nature's Own Comedians' and I always thought that hit the staub square on the head. They're sure enough legitimate mummies, too. By which I mean they never mug. Neither do the greatest clowns. They and the bears do their stuff with pantomime and crazy walking and by always keeping the straightest kind of a face. That makes for absolute contrast between expression of countenance and expression of body, than which there's nothing funnier.

"I recall that Al Miaco often came to study Whitey. Both of them gone now—the clown dead at seventy-eight and the polar after trouping for more than twenty-five years.

" 'Ben,' Al said to me one day, 'if I could keep my face as frozen as that and at the same time copy Whitey's shambling gait I'd be the funniest human on two feet.' "

"But they don't know they're funny," John guessed.

"Probably not. And the reason they never mug is simply because their faces aren't built so they can. The skin is drawn too tightly over the frontal. That's what makes a polar bear the most uncertain of animals. Now it's no trick at all to read a lion or a leopard for, nose wrinklins aside, their eyes change with their moods. But that's not the case with a polar. You don't get the slightest tip-off from his expression as to what may be going on inside his head.

"Visit around with Deacon as long as you like and you'll never be sure whether he's thinking, 'Certainly is nice weather we're having,' or maybe saying to himself, 'If that cage peeper ever gives me half a chance I'll knock him clear through the side wall.'

"To add another point, it's the expressionless face that makes them look so much alike, provided, of course, that they are of about the same color and size. Now you will hear people say that all elephants look the same. That's a wrong conclusion because I never knew two bulls that weren't altogether different once you got acquainted with their eyes and faces. On the other hand it's an absolute fact that polar bears of a like age cannot at times be told apart.

"Take Murphy, Tillie, and Betty, three of the nine polars that Theodore Schroeder used to work in an act here with the show. The trio were around two years old when he started to train them and were so similar that he was obliged to put a red spot on the cheek of Tillie, a black one on Murphy and a green mark on Betty in order to know which was which. What I mean is that he did that when he began teaching them their places on the pedestals which is always the first step in breaking polar stock. Then he painted corresponding colors on the different pedestals.

"Of course, as the work progressed he got to know them while at practice by their individual movements and dispositions and also by the way they responded to their names. Then Tillie began to take on a coat coloring differing from the other two.

"But just the same, and this is the interesting point," Ben said, punctuating the words with his pipe stem, "taking them after they were full grown and the very man who saw them month in and month out absolutely could not, when they were sprawled on the den floor, tell Murphy from Betty. I know because Schroeder and I often tried it together out there in the back yard when the act was with the show.

"And I'll tell you another thing about polar



"The polar bear is always the champion among trained animals when it comes to shooting the chutes."



"Coming to a nice coal-black bear answering to the name of 'Red.' "

bears," Ben concluded as he and John left Old Deacon and walked toward the lion cages, "they are likely to be a good deal better sports when playing together than a lot of humans I've known. You'll often see plenty of rough and tumble stuff and some pretty stiff wallops both given and taken. Yet very rarely do such romps result in a row. Yes, siree, John Foster; with all their poker-face expression your young and old Rain-on-the-Roofs are danged good citizens."

CHAPTER IV

AROUND THE LION DENS

LIKE as not," Ben guessed, "you've heard about the small boy who described the equator as a 'menagerie lion running around the world through Africa.' Now without ever having inquired into the history of that young Marco Polo I'll wager he'd been to a circus not a great while before and that his pa had told him that all the lions he saw came from Africa. Because I hear a lot of grown-ups telling children that very thing. I'll own that the preponderance of lions are on their side for most of these do come from the dark continent. But India has its lions, too; though, like Sam over there, the species is considerably smaller in stature. The same, you'll notice, is true of Queenie, who hails from Western Asia."

"But we have lions, haven't we?" John countered. "Out west and in South America?"

"No, not sure-enough ones. They're often referred to as the 'American lion' because they look a bit like a small African lioness. But the breed is not

lion at all, but puma. Here's Buster at his water pan. Let's watch him drink.

"Like all cat animals he squats to quench," Ben pointed out. "I figure that is because he's of the species that make a quick getaway by springing. Those animals like hyenas, wolves, bears, and zebras that run for it when disturbed, always stand to drink. Notice Buster's tongue?"

"Looks awful rough," John said.

"Rough is right; and prickly with the prickles all pointing back toward the throat. A good stiff wool carder hasn't anything on a lion's tongue and when he's of a mind to eat that way he can remove every sliver of meat from a bone without once using his teeth."

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Having finished drinking Buster wiped his lips with his tongue and then with a sudden upward movement brought his broad maned head to attention and gazed fixedly across the tent.

"Now try and find out what he's spotted," Ben suggested. "Only you won't discover it. I've watched our lions do that same thing a hundred times and so far as I can tell you they aren't looking at anything. Yet the trait is so decidedly marked in the lion that I've given it considerable thought and arrived at two conclusions. The more reasonable one is that some peculiar sound has caused him to listen intently and that, just as a human will cock

his head the better to hear, so does a lion stare straight ahead. The other notion seems to be almost too crazy to be worth repeating; but dern me if I haven't sometimes thought it's a game that's pulled on us two-legs—a trick to get us to turn around.

“And there's another angle: A male, once he's grown, won't allow you to get your eyes in a direct line with his line of vision. Cross into it so as to try to meet him in a direct gaze and he'll shift to a line somewhat over your head. And somehow he always does that in a way that is likely to make you feel mighty small. In fact I defy anybody to stand around Buster's cage for very long without gradually growing hep to the fact that he's being completely ignored. Not that a lion high-hats you. He goes farther than that. He makes you feel that you simply don't exist. It's that quality added to his general appearance that to my way of thinking always will entitle him to the moniker of the 'King of Beasts.' Yes, I know that the jungle muckrakers have long since decided—and correctly—that a tiger can whip the socks off a lion. But nevertheless when it comes to nobility of looks and behavior becoming a gentleman I'll always be for handing the crown to the boys like Buster.”

Ben laughed as he refilled his brier.

“There used to be an old cage tender with the



"They can register as many different emotions as a movie star."



"At the tip of the tail and concealed by the tuft there is a horny point that's as sharp as a thorn."

trick who had a stock line that he'd often pass out to visitors who showed a special interest in his pets.

" 'Yes, sir and ma'am,' he'd say, 'I've been down in the slumps and I've been up among the aristocracks, but what I say is, the lion's the king of beasts.'

"And once you get that sentence translated for yourself you'll agree that the old-timer was correct in his observation. For among two-legs and four-legs, beasts or human, no nobler head was ever glued to shoulders. Further than that, and taking the tribe as a whole, there is no run of captive animals that wear more mobile faces. Watch a den of them for a spell and you'll find that they can register as many different emotions as a movie star."

Two cages farther along the line a huge male had begun to roar.

"No, I can't account for it," Ben confessed. "Of course when the feeding hour draws near they'll start to bellow and that most likely indicates some such feeling as impatience or possibly pleasure over what's in store for them. Yet they are quite as apt to start roaring midway between meals, or—though not so frequently—a little after being fed. Probably some sound or odor sets one off and the others follow suit. Perhaps they just like to feel their heads tingle as is the case with some people

when they talk or sing. And without doubt, just as with moving up and down the cage, roaring works off excess energy.

"There was once a doctor with the show who claimed that lions roared to get the wind off their stomachs, and pointed to the fact that they 'coughed up their cries.' Like as not the doc was full of fun but you can get his point by watching Mars there. See where the sound, or at any rate the effort to make it, seems to come from? Away back toward the haunches. Looks as though he gets his diaphragm to working and then scoops the roar forward until it rumbles out of his mouth. But however the roar is manufactured, there's no other like it, except one. Know what that is?"

"The tiger's?"

"That's a natural enough guess, yet the truth is—but I'll spin you a yarn. Lean yourself against that quarter pole while I stoke the face furnace.

"A number of years back we had a display of ostriches here in the menagerie," Ben said between whiffs. "They traveled on the train and back and forth to the lot in a closed wagon but here in the cat house were exhibited to the folks in a pen placed at one end of the humps and convicts. Loading those big turkeys at night was as fine a nuisance as was ever introduced into the peaceful precincts of a travelling zoo. In the first place the wagon would

be backed up until its rear was just under the eaves and then a cleated plank would be slanted from the ground up to the open doorway. Such in position the boys would take the birds one at a time and shunt them across the menagerie track, up the runway, and into the wagon. To see them in action was a picture that has yet to be painted.

"Charlie Smith was the menagerie superintendent in those days. So tackling the first to be loaded, Smithy would grab hold of a neck with his left hand and claw into the back with his right. That was for steering purposes. Then a half dozen helpers would attach themselves to the stern end, Smithy would holler 'Let 'er roll!' somebody would drop a section of the pen, Smithy point the bird's head, the rear guard give a mighty heave and away they'd go lickety-larrup across the track, up the plank and into the wagon. And so on—there being six of the turkeys—six times a night and six nights a week.

"Well, one night they'd been loaded as usual and a fellow we called Pittsburgh had just tied the tarpaulin over the rear of the wagon when he drops the rope end and starts hunting the boss.

"'Come out here quick, Smithy—there's something wrong in the turkey coach!'

"'What do you mean, wrong?' demands Smithy, loping up.

" 'There's a lion in with 'em!' shouts Pittsburgh.

" 'Why, you're crazy!' answers the boss. 'How could there be——'

"But before he had finished a rumbling roar interrupted. And there was no mistaking from where. It came from the inside of the ostrich wagon!

"They say Smithy's face was a study. But then if you had ever known him and his brand of humor you would have understood what followed. Always a lightning-fast thinker, he made a quick gesture for the mum.

" 'Not a word about this to anybody, Pitts. It's their finish and thank the lord we'll never have to load them pests again. Goin' away, Jim!' he called to the driver. Jim says, 'Giddap,' and the den rolled off across the lot."

Ben paused to light his third match. Through the smoke John caught a reminiscent grin and began to grin too.

"Of course you're smelling a rat; and so did Pittsburgh, though he afterward told me that he'd be hook-roped if he could locate the rodent until Smithy finally took pity on him and helped him out.

" 'Son,' Smithy said, 'it's plain to me that you've heard your first roar from a bull ostrich and if it

will salve your feelings any I'll add that I was once just as badly fooled as you were.'

"Which is entirely understandable," Ben ended, "for I'll defy any but the keenest ear to detect a difference between the roar of a lion and the booming of an ostrich even after being initiated. Now suppose we call on the ladies."

They again approached the cage line and this time stopped in front of a splendid lioness.

"Isn't she Nellie?" John asked.

"Good memory! It certainly is and there never was a nicer old gal anywhere. There's a mother for you! Raised even her first litter of cubs, which isn't always the case—not by a long Sunday run. The fact is that the average lioness will kill her first babies. There are a lot of theories as to why that happens, one being that a new mother doesn't know what to make of the arrivals; a bit fearful of them. I confess that that idea has always sounded pretty far fetched to me for you'd naturally suppose that mother instinct would put her wise as to the how, why, and what of the little rascals. To my way of looking at it there's a lot more reason in the supposition that it's an extra amount of maternal instinct that accounts for such cage tragedies. It being a first experience the mother is likely to be pretty much wrought up and more than ever 'as nervous as a cat' as the saying goes. Then she hears a noise, goes sort

of cracked over the idea that it's coming from something that is going to harm the punks and so she actually kills them to protect them.

"And if you want to wade into the psychology of the thing that's not such an all-fired strange theory after all. Why, not so long ago a Russian in a troupe of performers here with the show was telling me the story of a rich woman over in his country. Seems that in the pre-Bolshevik days she decided on account of poor health to leave her estates in Russia and live in Italy. At which her peasants, who had a big affection for her, kicked up an awful row. And when she insisted they said that if she went they'd burn her forests and houses! Get the point? They cared for her so much that in order to keep her they'd muss up her fortune! So in the face of that, the idea of a mother lion killing to save isn't such a nutty one after all. But Nellie here is better educated. Nice old gal, she is—nice old gal!"

As though understanding, the lioness lowered her head and moved along the cage with one ear fluttering against the bars.

"Do lion cubs roar when they're small?" John asked. "I mean do they make little roars?"

"No, their voices have to change as they grow up. The first sound is a 'Yow,' like that of a big tomcat and is made when they are around two months old.

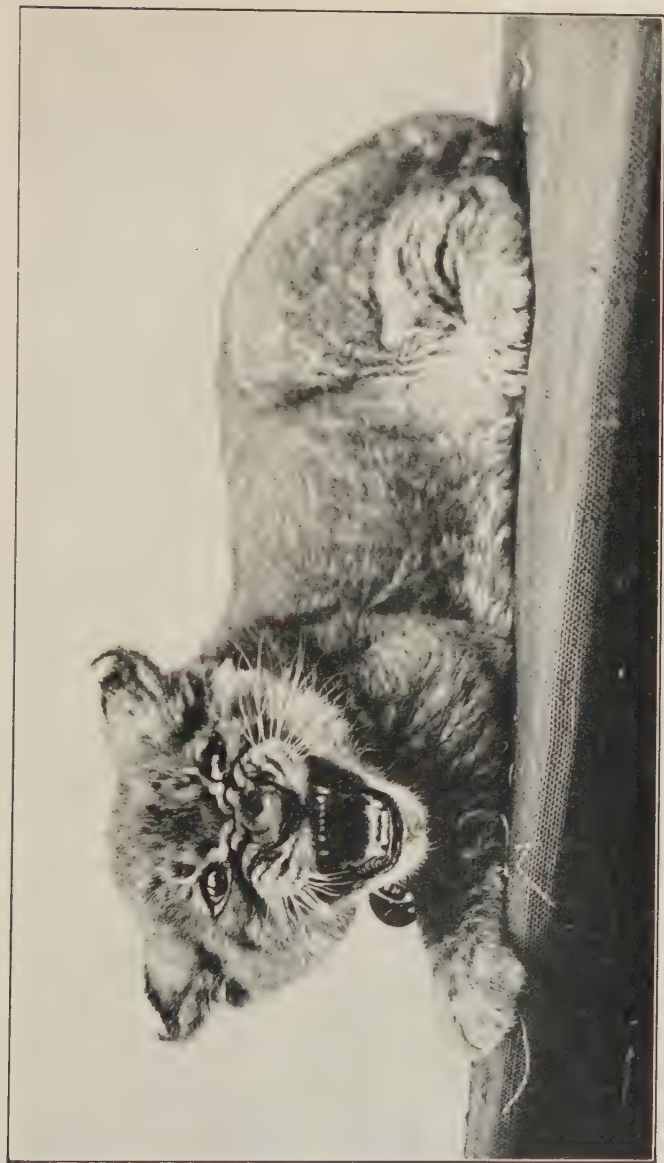
After a time that turns into a rather weak bark and finally into a sure-enough roar. The first time I ever saw a litter of lion cubs I'd have sworn by judging from their coats that they were baby tigers or leopards. All of the young have marks that suggest spots or stripes, but except for spots on the legs that may persist for a long time, most of the markings soon fade and the coats begin to take on the tawny color of the adults.

"It isn't true that a lion pounds himself with his tail to make himself mad, is it?" John wanted to know.

"Not a word of it. Still, at the tip of the tail and concealed by the tuft there is a horny point that's as sharp as a thorn. Following that discovery somebody a long time back started the story that nature had provided the prod so that a lion could jab himself by lashing his tail and so get so fighting mad that maybe he'd tackle a couple of tigers and a leopard all in one bout. Even now you'll occasionally find somebody who believes the myth. I remember that when a fellow insisted on telling Smithy that that was the why of it, Smithy just says,

"'Maybe so, partner; but my own theory has allus been that once upon a time the lion's tail used to be a whole lot longer than it is now, such when he used the thorn for picking his teeth.'

“And one guess is as good as another,” Ben finished as they left the lions’ cages, “for from all I’ve read and heard nobody has yet decided why the tribe should have that mysterious sticker or to what use it was ever put—if any.”



"A 'Yow,' like that of a big tomcat."



"The young have marks that suggest spots or stripes."



"The coats begin to take on the tawny color of the adults."

CHAPTER V.

AT WHITEY'S CAGE

PRETTY nearly every animal in a circus menagerie wears two handles," Ben remarked as he and John continued their rounds, "by which I mean the fancy name that the show's press agents hang on him and the one by which he's known in the bosom of the family.

"Taking a few examples from where we're standing now, there's the saddle-back tapir five cages down the line. Of course he's classed as a saddle-back because of that peculiar white patch that marks his ridge and sides. He hails from the Malay Peninsula so no sooner had he arrived than one of the publicity lads hunts up a map of the new-comer's home grounds and promptly names him 'Kelantan.'

"Now that tapir never did anything to warrant any such moniker as that. In fact like most of his genus he's a quiet, unobtrusive cuss and soon grows mighty fond of whoever is tending him. And do you suppose he answers to that fancy Hindoo title?

Why you could holler 'Kelantan' until you was redder in the face than the cage he's in and never get a ruffle from that homely snout of his. But just say 'Arky' and he's all appetite and attention. For he looking more like a razorback hog than anything else the cage men could think of, they called him Arkansaw; which, however, soon got shortened to Arky.

"Or take the punk zebra that you can glimpse down at the far end of convict row. The newspaper stories refer to him as 'Baby Wee Stripes,' which is a pretty enough name and fairly descriptive. Only here in the cat house he's simply 'Shotgun,' so called because small as he is he's tough to handle.

"Not that these homespun names always fit. Like now and then coming to a nice coal-black bear answering to the name of 'Red.' "

"From his keeper?"

"Exactly. And I suppose the most outrageous case of that kind is lounging in that cage to our right. Come on over."

Ben led the way until they stood before an unusually long den with but a single occupant. This occupant was a tiger—easily the largest that John had ever seen.

"Or most anybody else," supplemented Ben. "I've met a lot of kitty-cats in my time and I want to tell you that he's the biggest and handsomest

thing in stripes. Now what do you suppose he's called?"

"Emir," John answered promptly. "I've read about him in the papers."

"Emir it is so far as the publicity goes, and that having been his daddy's name has a right to be everywhere. Yet here in the menagerie he's just plain 'Whitey'—always has been and like enough always will be."

The tiger slowly rose to advance along the bars, brushing them with his cheek. Ben scratched him under one ear.

"What do you say, Whitey? Come on now—talk to us a little."

The animal made a soft fluttering with the lips and a sound which John heard as "Fr-r-r-rr"; as though he had puckered his own lips and half spoken and half blown the word "fur" with the "u" left out. Whitey continued his walk to the extreme end of the den, wheeled, and then returned still keeping his cheek against the bars.

"Experts tell us that Whitey is as perfect a specimen of the tiger as they've ever seen," Ben said, "and that is the more remarkable because he is the son of parents that were full blood brother and sister. We know that to be a fact, for Emir, the father, and Nellie, the mother, were likewise born in captivity. Both corking performers, too. If you

happened to see the big tiger act that Mathias used to work with the show you may remember Nellie. She was the sweetest leaper in the troupe and kept right on performing long after she was in whelp.

"Now the rule is that inbred offsprings turn out badly. They often grow up to be misshapen or cross-eyed, or they don't grow up at all. But right here let me tell you something that you may not know: There seems to be a general impression that if parents are closely related by blood the babies are bound to fare to the bad. Yet that is only true in case either the father or the mother is imperfect. Assuming one or both to be off-color, the bad strain—differing from what would follow if the parents were unrelated—would be multiplied several times over in the young. But if the parents are perfect specimens then the fact that they are blood relatives cuts no figure at all. Which leads us to the conclusion that Mamma Nellie and Papa Emir were both double A cats."

"Gee, Whitey has a nice face," John said.

"Good eyes," Ben agreed, "and I'm glad you discovered that for yourself. For there is all the difference in the world in the peepers of different animals. There's a puma back there a few cages that simply hates himself and always has. He's got the meanest set of lamps that ever blazed from a head of hair. From that type they grade to the

sullen, the indifferent, and lastly to what is actually a kindly eye; with which variety the Creator provided Whitey. Whitey has always been friendly with everybody except one man—and that's the man who tends his cage. You probably noticed the boys cleaning dens earlier this morning? How they reach in through the toeboard opening with the scraper iron and rake the floor? Now Whitey has always resented that operation and very quickly shows dislike for the man who handles the iron. Docile at other times you'll see him bristling and snarling whenever the scraper comes in sight. And that's something to think about: Remembering that Mathias always carried an iron bar when he worked the parents, is Whitey's strong dislike for the scraper iron a throwback to their resentment? Mind you I don't say that it is, but it's a point worth considering.

"To me it is always mighty interesting to watch animals grow up and develop different traits," Ben continued, "and especially the tigers. Like, for example, Boston and Beauty that were born in New England when we were playing there back in '22.

"That was the year Mabel Stark had her tiger act with the show, and Princess, the prospective mother, was among her foremost thespians. When not in the arena Princess and the rest of the troupe were always quartered in a long cage similar to

Whitey's and which was spotted at the rear of the big top. But as the whelping time came along one end of the wagon was gated off and Princess given the apartment to herself.

"Then one night the whelps showed up and I want to tell you they were the takingest things you ever saw. Of course we only peeked for a time because if there's any mother that don't like to have you fooling around when her babies first arrive, that mother is a tiger mother. Besides it's dangerous for the little ones. Too much disturbance might result in the same thing that happens with some lion mothers.

"Still, as Mabel Stark always said, Princess was away above the average run of tigers. Like Whitey, she had the kindly eye. So it wasn't any time at all until the tarpaulin curtains were removed and everybody with the show paying their respects.

"Meantime there had been a vacant pedestal in the cat act. The thing used to stand around in the back yard when the other props were carried into the steel circle. One day some wag hung a square of pasteboard on it with a scrawl reading, 'Resting while Princess Cat recovers. Mother and babies doing well. Will be on the job in a few days.'

"And, right enough, Princess was back with her public, as the sure-enough actresses say, within a week—going in afternoon and night with all of us

wondering where her mind must have been during those first separations. On these occasions and as the time scheduled for the tiger number would draw near Mabel would go up to Princess' den and talk to her.

" 'Time to go, old girl,' she'd say. 'Nice kittens! Nice old musser—yes she is! Nicest old musser that ever was!'

"I'm here to testify that she'd simply bull that mamma cat into leaving those whelps and liking it. Not that there weren't days when Princess showed some objection. But I don't have to tell that it was never of a serious nature for of course there couldn't be a row on account of the babies. No, the trick was turned by gentle persuasion.

"Once in the arena I can't say that Princess always worked well. Now and then she'd blow up in the middle of a trick and run to the side of the performing den nearest the back yard and, consequently nearest the whelps. Mabel said that there never was any doubt in her mind but what Princess either heard or sensed their whimpers even over the racket of the big show band. Called back to her pedestal she would continue to perform but in a dazed sort of fashion as though her mind wasn't on the act. Yet she never harmed her trainer."

Ben snorted.

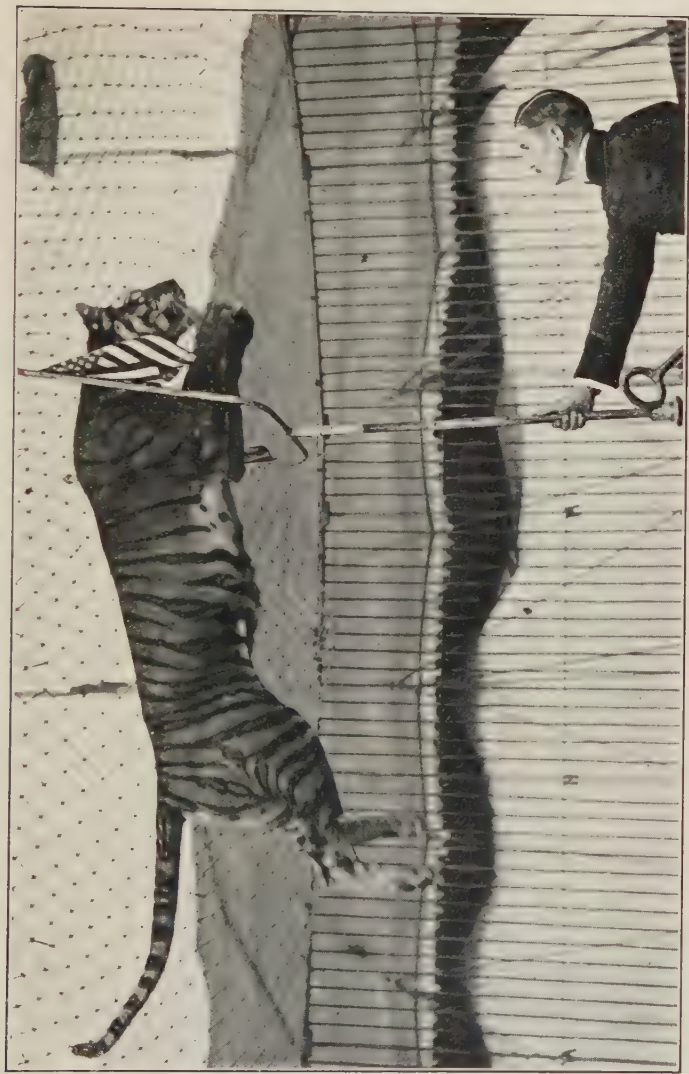
"Why here if I wasn't reading a while back

about how nobody dared handle tiger cubs and then be anywhere near the mother without a call for the coroner. Bunk! Just pure bunk. For Mabel Stark used to cuddle Boston and Beauty a half dozen times a day and never a complaint from Princess—in the arena or out of it.

“So the mother and kittens trouped through the season and then went into winter quarters at Bridgeport. By that time Boston and Beauty were better than five months old and as romping a pair of cut-ups as you’d find anywhere. It being easy enough to separate them, the mother was housed with her mates in the training barn while the twins took up their abode in Miss Stark’s home.”

“Right in the house?” John asked.

“All over the house. I saw them several times that winter and on my word they were better behaved than some two-legged youngsters. They selected their respective corners in the kitchen almost from the first and it was there that they had their meals. This might be bread and milk, or veal, or any nice tender meat. Pretty often there was a romp in the hallway. Then each cub would perch on a chair assigned to it and sit there for hours together watching people and cars go past in the street. Nine o’clock was bedtime. On the stroke of the hour Miss Stark would open a door leading



"She was the sweetest leaper in the troupe."



"They were better behaved than some two-legged youngsters."

down to the basement. Then she'd always call out exactly the same thing:

"Well, what do you say? Let's go!"

"At which the pair would be into the hall and down the stairs like two streaks of furred lightning. They slept together in a box bedded with straw and located not a great distance from the furnace. If later on somebody came to bank the fire the cubs were sure to waken, poke up their heads and purr with their lips—something like the sound Whitey made awhile ago. But they never offered to get out of the box. At least not until seven in the morning, which always seemed to be their regular hour for leaving the hay.

"Following this routine," Ben went on, "those whelps lived in the house until the show came to New York for the March opening at the Garden, or until they were a little over nine months old. I won't say that they hadn't scratched up a bit of furniture during that time, but on the whole they were mighty good children."

While Ben had been telling the story of Boston and Beauty, Whitey had for no apparent reason lowered his head and set up a series of doleful cries. These gradually diminished to short, coughlike "Oofs" that ended in a grumbled whine.

"Notice the difference between his cry and that made by Mars?" Ben asked.

"It's kind of sadlike," John ventured.

"Right as a traffic cop. In fact it's the most mournful voice in the menagerie. What's more there's a reverberating quality to it that is apt to fool the best of ears. Stand back there in the connection and hear a tiger going at full blast and you'll find it practically impossible to tell from exactly where the cry is coming. He sort of spreads his voice in two or three directions. And always sadder than a rainy holiday. Now there are sentimental souls who'll tell you that doleful voice goes to prove how unhappy he is over being caged. But the truth is that nature originally provided him with that brand of howling apparatus so that he can scare up his prey in the wild state without the breakfast dish growing hep to where Mister Tiger has stationed himself.

"For judged by the evidence and not basing conclusions on a lot of idle speculation, I'd say that Whitey is just as contented here as he would be in the jungles. He puts on the feed bag right regularly and without ever having to fight for his meals. He gets doctored if he happens to be out of fix, sleeps in a clean cage, and has plenty of company. In fact—aside from the scraper iron—there are but two things that seem to annoy him, just as they will any tiger. Those are rain and sizzling weather. Why the rain does I can only give a guess. It bothers

elephants the same way. Now if we had rain every day—which, glory be, we don't—both tiger and elephant ears would like as not get used to it. But since the showers are fairly infrequent during a season's tour they probably never grow accustomed to a mysterious pounding that is somewhere overhead and which they can't see.

"As to heat, most any authority on tigers will tell you that they're agin it under all circumstances, whether a native of India or farther north. You've got to remember that probably half the tigers in existence don't live in the tropics but range through Eastern Siberia and North China. Coupled to which there's a belief that once upon a time all tigers lived only in cold countries. So maybe that accounts for the disgruntledness shown by ours on egg-frying days."

"But why isn't it the same with the polar bears?" John puzzled.

"A right pert question," Ben returned. "But remember that I didn't say that the polars were happiest in hot weather. All I said was that they seemed to stand scorching days better than the cats, and probably for two reasons: Your polar can, by shedding, come a whole lot nearer getting himself into B.V.D.'s than a tiger can; and he's a whole lot less fussy. Recall what the newspaper column docs always advise when the heat waves are on? Don't get

overwrought or unduly excited. And while the polar bear doesn't, the tiger is likely to. In fact a tiger is at all times what you might call a nervous critter."

"But isn't that because he wants to get out where there's more room?" John persisted.

"Probably. But can't it be argued that that's his job—entertaining folks who come to the show? As somebody has remarked, why shouldn't tigers and lions and such animals be given jobs to do, the same as dogs, horses, and us two-legs? Oho! says the reformer, but you've got your liberty. Like Sam Hill we have! Not a showman who's not caged on the lot and many a time when the old trick's in trouble doing the work of two or three men. Look at the number of people denuded in office buildings, in shops and underground. Call them free? Hardly. And to get back to Whitey: suppose he was in the jungle with plenty of paw room. What then? Granting for the sake of argument that even though born in captivity he would know how to handle himself, he'd have to battle for his food, go hungry part of the time, and while I've got no statistics to prove it I'm betting that he would have a far shorter life than he'll have in this old canvas cat house. As to longevity we have had tigers—Jerry, for one—that have lived to the ripe old age of twenty-five years. And not once during that time did any of

them murder an ox, an antelope, or a tapir, or even an Indian villager for dinner.

"Still," Ben cautioned, "don't let me keep you from having your own ideas about animals in captivity. I'm merely handing you the showman's side of it. Concluding which I'll add that whenever somebody fixes it so that all us humans have got nothing to do but sleep, fish, and whittle three hundred and sixty-five days out of every year, I, for one, will be Johnnie-at-the-rat-hole for taking the locks off all the cages."

CHAPTER VI

THE FOOL-'EM CATS

NOW we're coming to what the boys call the 'Fool-'em Cages,' " Ben announced. He and John halted before a barred wagon, divided across the center and containing two spotted cats—one in each of the two compartments.

"Not one out of a thousand visitors but thinks they're the same thing, while the fact is——"

"Please don't tell me," John interrupted. "I want to see if I can figure it out."

"Go to it," Ben laughed as the boy walked to where he could get a better view of the animals. As if curious to learn what might be going on, the two got to their feet.

"Now I know," John decided, "because I can see their tails. The longest tailed one is a leopard and the other's a jaguar."

"You surely have won the hand-painted loving cup," Ben said. "Yes, sir; congratulations are in order and I heap 'em on you. Now give us some other reasons besides that tail evidence."

"Well, the jaguar is bigger than the leopard."

"Right again, only that might not convince a jury in case you were presenting animals where the jaguar was considerably younger than the leopard. I'd say a better way would be to compare the heads. The jaguar's is always wider and rounder. Also he has stockier legs. Most of all, however, the difference lies in what you've pointed out. The jaguar's tail is much bushier and only about half as long as the leopard's. Also it doesn't taper off. The spots differ, too, if you'll take a closer squint. They're mostly larger in the jaguar and arranged in clearer groupings.

"On top of that, at least for a kitty, the jaguar is a clumsy bozo—the sort of stand-up-and-fall-down among the cat tribe. Still he's no slouch for action and seeing that he's the largest of our Western cats I suppose we ought to be proud of him."

As they watched the pair the leopard mounted with a single bound to a narrow board placed from wall to wall near the roof of the compartment.

"That's the closest practical thing we can substitute for a limb," Ben pointed out. "Same sort of an arrangement for Jim, the jaguar, you'll notice. There he goes up to his now. Only with no such graceful leap as that Mary Jane just made. They'll stretch out up there a good part of the time. See them that way in the jungles when they're kipped in

a tree with the sunlight coming in broken up bits through the foliage and mixing in with the spots on their coats, and they're better hid than a katydid on a cabbage leaf.

"You've probably gathered that of the two I'm strongest for Mary Jane," Ben guessed. "She's tricky and quicker than sudden death. But she's got personality and often seems to get a lot of enjoyment playing alone. You'll see her sliding back and forth, rolling over and over and even acting at times as though she was frolicking with a make-believe playmate."

"What does she get to eat?" John queried.

"Mary Jane is probably better than twenty and once we get under way has for years taken her seven pounds of meat and liver as regularly as 4:30 rolls around. And she rarely ever differs in the amount of water she drinks, no matter where the mercury stands. By and large four quarts a day seem to be exactly to her liking. Once in a while she's given milk and eggs or even chicken; especially when the show's first starting out. Funny thing about that, but a lot of cat animals—even the oldest troupers—get what we call 'off their feed' the first few days out of quarters. Not so strange either, I suppose, because they probably get excited and nervous when first starting to travel just as some humans do. But leopards and pumas



"That's why a man who looks after a lion or a tiger cage is called a meat-cutter."



"A tiger is at all times what you might call a nervous critter."



"'Meowing' and moping around like a sick house cat."

seem to be especially affected that way. Won't have a thing to do with the regular rations such as they've been having all winter. So they have to be coaxed a bit and that's when the milk and eggs are introduced.

"Why, two days out from quarters I've seen Mary Jane here 'Meowing' and moping around like a sick house cat. She'll look at you with woebe-gone eyes as much as to say, 'Oh, boy, but I feel bum!' Then she'll lap a half-dozen tongues of milk, nibble at some egg, roll her eyes and go lie down in a corner. But at the next feeding she may eat all that is given her. Come the third day and she'll get chicken and by the end of the week will be back to usual rations, snarling over her beef with all the appetite of our very best boarders."

"Is Jim fed the same kind of food?"

"Exactly the same, only if now and then there happens to be some fish left over at the cook house he may get that. Like as not you know that in the wild state he's a great fisherman. In fact there's nothing he relishes more than fish unless maybe it's turtle. One of the drivers here with the show who used to hunt in South America says that with plenty of turtles in sight a jaguar will turn over three times more than he can possibly eat."

"Does Jim ever get turtle meat?"

"Never to my knowledge except once and that

involves a winter-quarters tragedy that hasn't been explained even to this day.

"The thing happened in the days before the combine and when the Ringling show was located up in Baraboo, Wisconsin. Where the victim of the murder came from I don't just mind. But he was a cute little turtle of the name of Pickles. Pickles belonged to the cat-barn boys and they'd polished his back until it shone like an equestrian director's new silk hat. Some thought he'd answer to his name but I have my doubts about that. But there was no getting around the fact that he was always keen for having his noddle scratched, and if you'd hold him up in front of a quarters lion cage he'd put out his head and wag it up and down in the most comical sort of way. Until a cat roared. Then back it would go quicker than a sunny-day show man hunting a wagon in a shower.

"But one morning Pickles turned up missing. Search was made behind the hay, under tarpaulins—every blamed place. It wasn't likely that he'd crawled off for a winter snooze because the weather was holding fairly well and besides that the cat barn was steam heated. Still there was no sign of him. Then a week later he was found—or at least all there was left of him. It was when Houston was cleaning out Jim's den. Of course it got a daily scrape and douse, same as here on the road. But

on this particular morning Jim was unusually frolicsome and kept jumping from floor to perch as Houston worked the scraper iron. At about the fifth leap something plopped from the perch to the floor. It was Pickles's overcoat! There lay the shell as empty as yesterday's show lot and danged near as well polished inside as it was on top.

"How Pickles got inside the cage none of us could ever figure out. But that he had been slaughtered, devoured, and the empty shell carried to the perch board nobody doubted. And that was the last and only time that I know of when Jim banqueted on tortoise meat."

CHAPTER VII

ALONG CONVICT ROW

TONY rascals, aren't they?" Ben said as he and John started down the picket line where the zebras were tethered. "And for the most part as finicky and as mean as they are pretty. Notice how they comb their hair? Smithy used to say that the roaring of the lions kept their ancestors' hairs on end so long that it finally got to be a zebra characteristic—having his mane stick up like an upside-down scrubbing brush."

"Some books I've read say they are untamable," John said.

"And there's truth in it," Ben replied. "For you can educate them up to a certain point and then they get so all-fired stubborn and unreliable that most breakers give them up as a bad job. Now, I suppose men have tried their hand at training zebras ever since the show business started. Years ago Adam Forepaugh decided to have a sure-enough convict number that would be good enough for the middle ring. The breakers worked all winter in quarters and turned out a pretty fair act. That is,



"Taught to stand for harness and pull a small float in the spec."



"Had him believing that when the convicts were washed you had to keep close along the white stripes so's not to disturb the decorations."

it worked O. K. in private rehearsal. But when it came to public appearances why there was zebras all over the big top. They simply wouldn't mind the teacher and acted as though they'd forgotten all they ever knew. So what did Forepaugh do? Why he ups and turns failure into success. He pulled the smartest piece of showmanship that has been applied to zebras before or since.

"He says, 'All right, my hearties, if you kick over having yourselves billed as "Intelligent Striped Beauties taught to perform the most graceful and intricate tricks," then, by Godfrey, I'll exhibit you to the world as the "Terrible and Untamable Tiger Asses." '

"Whereupon he bought a lot of chains that clanked good and loud, hooked the herd together like a squad of real convicts and henceforth exhibited them in this dangerous-looking make-up both in the menagerie and the street parade. That made an awful hit with the public and more than ever got folks to believing that the zebras were among the toughest output of the animal kingdom. In all probability it's harking back to those days that have caused a lot of granddads and some careless biographers to still believe things about zebras of which they're only part way guilty."

"But they've been trained since then, haven't they?" John asked,

"Off and on. For of course like any show feature that chain-gang stunt was only good for a certain length of time. Following it there came a spell when zebras were merely exhibited as you see them standing here now. Then more recently such expert trainers as Jorgen Christiansen have taken a whirl at them. Christiansen broke horses, zebras, and camels to work together. As in the former attempts they worked well enough in the quarters barn but once in Madison Square Garden with all the lights on, the band whooping it up and the crowd present, those convicts got so undependable that the big pedestal act of which they were a part had to be abandoned. Others that had been taught to stand for harness and pull a small float in the spec. are still used and make a good showing. But then, shucks, they don't do anything and it's seldom you can drive them. Mostly they have to be led around the hippodrome track by the bit. Then there have been so-called zebra 'liberty' acts. But as the name implies, a liberty act is one in which the actors are directed solely by spoken cues and not by means of guide ropes.

"Yet they make a splendid eyeful here in the menagerie. A sort of sport model among the horse family. Nor are all of them as pesky mean as Blaze there near the end of the line. He's a biter and kicker without precedent or equal. On the other

hand Minnie here is tolerably gentle. But spoiled as a star act. Minnie always wants her water first when the buckets are brought in and goes temperamental as all get out if she doesn't get it. Come nearer and see what's peculiar about her eyes."

They went up to the picket rope.

"I'd say they were pretty much like a horse's," John said after he had inspected them at close range.

"Pretty much is fairly close. But look at the lashes. Yours and a horse's curve up, don't they?"

"I see now. Minnie's curve down!"

"Exactly opposite from your own," Ben said. "And not only Minnie's but all those that I have ever seen—the eyelashes seeming always to curve with the eyeball instead of up and away from it. Now let's give Shotgun and his ma the up and down."

Molly and the colt were tethered a little apart from the other zebras. As they approached them the baby veered and was almost instantly lost to view.

"Get that duck! He'll do it almost every time, and if you weren't looking for him but just happened to pass by, ten to one you'd never notice he was present. Just a native trick continued in the menagerie. But come around on the other side of mamma and you'll see what an odd back-mane he has."

They turned the end of the picket line and this time Shotgun did not attempt to hide but stood in full view.

"He's developing a sure-enough mane now," Ben said, "but when he was younger there was an upright ridge of fuzzy, brownish hair running all the way from his neck straight along the backbone to the base of his tail. You can still see the traces of it. All zebra punks that I have ever seen have that and their tails are woolly looking as though they might be part sheep. Not that there's any nanny in them, of course, for I suppose you know they're all of the horse family, being a second or maybe a third cousin to the burro.

"Nifty striping, isn't it? And notice how much darker the stripes are on Molly than on her baby? That's another thing that's always true of the colts—never as distinctly marked at the start. But as they grow older the dark stripes will get blacker and the white markings whiter. To touch on fool arguments, that's one you'll hear going on between two zebra grooms: Is a zebra a white animal with black stripes or a black animal that's turned white? And you know there are still those who have a sneaking notion that zebras aren't anything more than white donkeys all dyed up like an Easter egg."

John grinned.

"It's a fact," Ben asserted. "Why I remember a

number of seasons back when a lad hired out and for a week the old heads had him believing that when the convicts were washed you had to keep close along the white stripes so's not to disturb the decorations. Later on he told me he'd fallen for the chatter because his dad had always claimed that zebras were fakes. But to get back to the markings no doubt you can tell me why they wear striped clothes?"

"For the same reason that the leopard has spots."

"Positively. And if you're of a mind to shovel into the past, a little speculating as to what caused the zebras to get into that awning wardrobe will be entirely in order. Was it the onslaught of such potentates as Mars and Buster that finally made this style of suiting popular with the convict forefathers? Maybe so. Unquestionably the lions did a lot toward educating the zebras along other lines. Speed for one thing. Yes, sir, just as the wolf nagged the horse into changing his style of shoes and made a swift runner out of him, so did the lions take the zebra in charge and make a fleet foot out of him. I'm concluding that many a wild pony and many a striped beauty went to make a wolf or a lion banquet before the schooling was complete; but those dogs and cats surely did turn out some fast pupils.

"Now you may think that's a nutty way to be lec-

turing on the survival of the fittest but I'll own it makes me see things clearer. For instance, pass a den of wolves around the time when you'll be hearing the races on in the big top. Then stop and consider that if it hadn't been for the forebears of those shaggy old slinkers there wouldn't be any horse races, and you get a new slant on the animal kingdom and its strange ways."

"Would Mars or Buster eat a zebra?" John wanted to know.

"Would an elephant refuse peanuts? Lead this string of sport models past those old boys' apartments if you want to see some fancy leaping! Why, in the wild state a zebra's ice cream for a lion. Any of the big cats love horseflesh. When the Ringling show wintered at Baraboo there was always a standing order for old horses, and practically nothing else was fed all winter long. A farmer's horse would get too old to be worth his keep so the farmer would bring him down to the quarters office and start to bargain. The price usually paid would run from three dollars for a lean nag to five or six for a heftier one. We had a slaughterhouse off in the woods where they'd be killed, skinned, cleaned, and quartered exactly as a steer would be and then swung up to freeze. Every so often a sledge would be sent into the woods to bring a supply to the cat

barn. Many animal men claim that fresh horse is the best of all meats for cats."

"But they don't get that here, do they?"

"Oh, no. Slaughtering horses on the road would be out of the question. I think you told me about seeing the butcher shop over by the cook house last time you visited? Well, the tougher parts and joints of the beeves we buy are served in the menagerie. That's why a man who looks after a lion or a tiger cage is called a meat cutter. He brings over the larger chunks, sets up what's called the meat board on jacks, and hacks the hunks into smaller bits."

"How much will a lion eat?" John asked.

"Buster will stow away from fifteen to seventeen pounds a day, six days hand running, and then like all our cat animals, is made to fast on Sunday. That's supposed to be best for them—to go without food one day a week. The weight I'm giving you includes bone. Pretty nearly any lion will get away with two thirds of the bone that's given him. It's good for their teeth—keeps them sharp and scraped and in the case of cubs helps them cut theirs. Just like you would give a teething ring to a human baby. Besides the beef the lions get a feeding of liver at least once a week. Then there's the milk shakes."

"Milk shakes for lions!" John exclaimed. "Geel

"That's a new one." He recalled how Old Andrew had once told him about the giraffes having afternoon tea.

"Yet this comes nearer the real thing than that, even," Ben said. "It's then that the meat cutters are sure-enough fizz fountain clerks. Two quarts of fresh milk and four of the same brand of eggs—that's the portion per lion. The ingredients are beaten to a nice froth and you should see those cats go to it! No, straws aren't served but no need with those broad tongues of theirs. The way they lap up the concoction and then lick the last drop from the pan surely proves they like it. That's good for the digestion, while the liver keeps them on their feed.

"But we're getting away from the convicts. None of them happen to be down just now but when they're in the straw later on don't fail to get a peep at the under side of a hoof. Especially the Mountain variety. You'll find it's a regular cup, the hollowed out part being so the owner can make faster time over the hill and stone country. But don't get too near when carrying out your research for next to an ostrich, a zebra is the world's prize kicker.

"And the manes are worth quite a study. See how the body stripes run square into them without a break? And how the mane bristles whenever the neck is arched? That is likely to make you wonder

if maybe the old Greek chaps who sculptured horses didn't use zebras for models."

"Like on the Parthenon!" John said. "Why, when they arch that way they're exactly like the manes on the frieze!"

"Spoken like a scholar. But to whip back into line again, I don't want you to go away with the impression that all zebras are bad actors. Some, like Minnie, are fairly decent as to disposition. For that matter, as you're probably beginning to gather, all animals are pretty much like folks—good and bad, sweet and ornery, all mixed up. Now among the zebras the Mountain species being the first discovered and so for quite a stretch of time being supposed to be the only one existing, his general cussedness got a lot of billing. As time went on his better-tempered cousins got pried into the open. But they arrived a little too late. People had by that time been largely sold on the idea that zebras were bad boys and so the whole family has since suffered on account of the roughneck element being the first broadcast. Not forgetting from what I was telling you a while ago that showmen have been guilty of helping keep up the general prejudice.

"And while we're on that subject, take another look at the camels. Not a bad lot by any means. Yet appearances are against them. They wear that haughty stare and their mouths and nostrils are so

constructed as to put them among the most supercilious of anything in hair or feathers. But you'll see humans with faces like that. Perhaps you'll think you wouldn't like them a little bit. Then you get acquainted and often change your mind. So while not giving the convicts and the humps anything more than an end ring position on the disposition program, it's only fair to state that they're entitled to a better spot than is usually allotted them."

Ben consulted his watch.

"Now I'm leaving you for a while. But I'll see you after a little. No time like the morning to excavate around a menagerie. There's Cap. Huling over at the seal dens and if you stroll over I think you'll see something pretty much out of the ordinary."

As Ben disappeared through the connection John puzzled over what he had more than once tried to decide: who Ben was and what his position might be with the show? He surely knew a lot about things. Anyhow, Captain Huling could tell him.

CHAPTER VIII

THE BABY SEA LION

NOTICED you'd joined out again," Mark Huling was saying a minute later as he and John shook hands, "and you're just in time to get a good slant at Monty. Ever see a baby seal? Didn't think it was likely you had."

The trainer of the "Pacific water dogs," as the menagerie men called the sea lions, piloted the way to the further of the two dens.

The larger part of the wagon bottom was in the form of a tank. This was filled with water in which a half-dozen seals were swimming or resting their noses between the bars. The remainder of the floor was raised above the water level, carpeted with heavy sheet tin and converted into a separate apartment by means of a barred though partly open gate sat between it and the tank. In this compartment sprawled an adult seal.

But there was no sign of Monty.

"We'll have to dig him out," Captain Huling said. "He's tucked in behind her. Here, Lady! Here, Lady! Come on over, mother."

Without further urging the one called Lady, half rolling and half pushing herself with her flippers, weaved across the metal floor. As she moved toward John and the trainer she disclosed the baby. Almost immediately he lifted himself on his flippers and uttering a queer sniffing sound ambled in the wake of the mother.

"There! How's that for a fine big boy? Just a month old yesterday and growing every minute. But then he was a bouncer right from the start. I only wish you could have seen him when he arrived at Montreal. That's his full name, you know."

"Was just the one born?"

"Monty was all and so far as I have information he is the only baby ever to arrive and be brought up with a circus. Indeed, during all the years that my brother and I have been training and performing seals we'd never so much as heard tell of seals breeding in such close quarters and so never gave the idea a thought. But when the show was in Philadelphia a year ago last spring we were changing the tank water one morning and came on a dead baby. We decided that it had been born in the night and like as not drowned in the mixup that is always on when there are a half dozen or more of the big ones in the tank.

"But you can believe that that set us to thinking. So once the show was off the road we went in for

breeding—or trying it, for from all we could learn by talking with others who had experience with show seals we got little encouragement. It seemed to be the general opinion that a baby among troup- ing water dogs was one of those things that happen only every hundred years.

“Nevertheless, we kept close tab on mother here,” Captain Huling continued, as he patted Lady’s neck, “and by the time we got down East in June we concluded that the stork was liable to be perching ’most any day. Then at Marblehead we began keeping Lady away from the rest by cooping her off where you see her now. That was on a Thurs- day. Sunday afternoon we reached Montreal for a two-day stand and when I got to the lot early Tuesday morning here was Mike who looks after the dens doing a regular buck and wing.

“ ‘Blow me if I know whether it’s a boy or a girl!’ Mike shouted, ‘but it’s arrived!’

“Excitement! Why there couldn’t have been more over a baby at the White House. I suppose I was as bad as anybody else. But there wasn’t any time to be lost in doing what seemed to be the right thing. I put it that way because it was a first expe- rience and we hadn’t hide nor hair of a rule to go by. Still it was plain to all of us that Lady couldn’t be put in the tank with the rest of the gang for there was already war between them with Lady

holding all the trenches. For while we had closed off the seals in the tank by tying a heavy curtain across the gate she knew well enough that they were there.

"If you don't believe a seal's eyes can blaze and the neck hair bristle you should have seen her then. She was all bark, teeth, and fire! And though there was this iron gate between her and the rest of the bunch she had them buffaloed to a standstill. The whole outfit was crowded as tight as they could jam against the far end of the tank. Now and then Lady would weave over to the baby but at the least sound of approach in the tank she'd be back at the gate like a mad bulldog at a garden fence.

"As you'll understand," Captain Huling pointed out, "the other wagon always contains just as many seals as this one, and we had no third den. So we decided to leave mother and baby where they were but quiet her down by tightening the curtain against the gate. That done we sloshed water on the floor of the compartment and gave her plenty to drink. How much water the baby would stand for we didn't know. We thought that perhaps he should go all the way in but agreed that if that was the case it would be safe enough to wait until the matinee when the mob would be out of the tank and inside the big top.

"The time arriving and the actors being in the

shifting cart, we opened the gate. Lady hopped right into the water. But Monty didn't make any attempt to follow nor did she offer to nose him in. Figuring that she knew what was best we let it go at that. She treated herself to quite a swim but at the first glimpse of the cart on the return from the big top she was out of the tank like a shot and on the defense. Still each day there was less of a row until at last we began leaving the gate open between the compartment and the tank."

"When did Monty finally go in?" John asked.

"When he was two weeks old. And the strange thing is that he didn't go in when the troupe was out doing their act but when the whole gang was in the tank. Once he made the plunge it would have given you a good laugh to see Lady trying to get him out again. He didn't want to go home but wanted to stay in and play with the other seals."

"Did Lady have to teach him to swim?"

"Apparently not. We watched that very closely and swimming seemed to come perfectly natural to him. On the other hand he still depends upon her for every bit of nourishment and I have an idea that he will nurse for a good while to come. There! He's at it now. That's right—just like a puppy dog. The nipples of a mother seal are different from those of a mother dog, though—sort of telescope and are out of sight when there's no baby to nurse."

"How big was he when he was born, Captain Huling?"

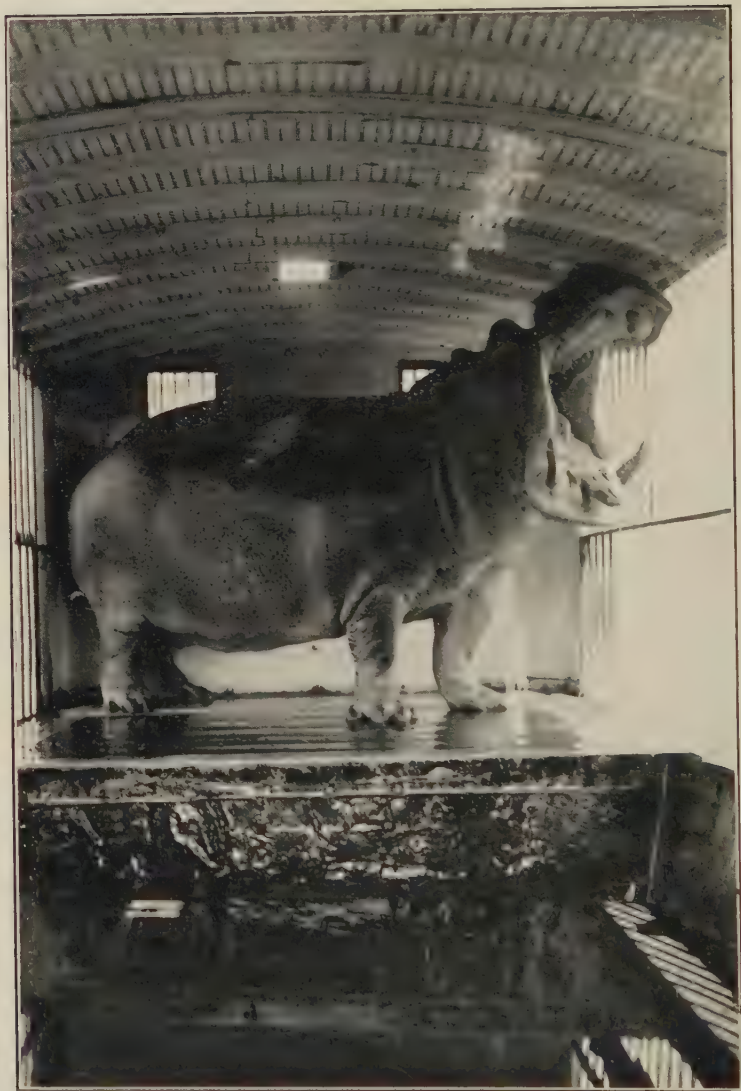
"We took pains to get an exact record of that, too. He measured within a fraction of twenty-six inches in length. We couldn't weigh him at once but did as soon as it was practicable and making allowances for the time lost he must have weighed very close to fifteen pounds at birth. From that you can see that he was longer and slimmer in proportion at the start than he is now. Also his eyes were wide open and I am confident that he could see from the first day."

"But of course he's a sea lion?"

"Oh, yes; all of them are. We just get in the habit of calling them seals. Or if you want to be entirely exact, these are really 'hair seals' meaning that instead of being covered with fur like those from whose skins coats are made, they're clothed with hair. And notice Lady—there where the hair is partly dry in patches, how it is a sort of golden brown? If she were in the sun long enough she would look like that all over. Once completely brown—which would mean that she was quite dry—there would be a strong chance of her getting sick if water wasn't supplied fairly soon. But a reasonable amount of sun won't hurt even a baby. I know that because we had Monty out only yesterday having his picture taken. You'd be surprised



"We posed him on a leash with Glen Graves, the boss property man's boy."



"The biggest mouth cavity of any animal on earth."

how strong he is. We posed him on a leash with Glen Graves, the boss property man's boy, just out there beyond the side wall. Monty stood for a couple of snaps and then decided he better be getting back to his mother. He dragged Glen with all the strength of a fair-sized dog and though he couldn't see the den, pointed his nose straight for it. Of course she was barking so maybe he followed her voice."

"Which one is the father?" John queried.

Captain Huling clapped him on the shoulder.

"I've been waiting for you to ask that question, for it happens that you know him. Remember the big boy that we were having trouble with over the stick and ball trick the other time you were here?"

"Neptune!"

"Old Nep himself. I can't round out the thing in book fashion by saying he's the proud father because from all I've been able to judge he's never shown the least interest in his son. And so far as Lady goes she was as much fernist him as she was hostile to the rest of the tank gang when we first had her and the baby separated from the troupe. Just the same he's the daddy. By the way, speaking of the other time you were here, did you ever put us right with your uncle? The one that claimed the performing seals never got fed except when they were doing their stuff?"

"I tried to," John confessed, "but he wanted to know if I'd seen you feeding them."

"And you hadn't. Well you just tell that hard-boiled relative of yours that you saw the operation this time, for here comes scoff right now."

Mike was just ducking under the side wall, a bucket in each hand. The buckets were filled with fish and cracked ice. As John and Captain Huling continued talking Mike proceeded to cut the fish into halves or thirds and then give them a thorough washing. Next he divided the mess between the two dens—not forgetting Lady.

"Smelt," the captain said. "It or herring is what they like best. And fresh of course. No matter what kind of food animals eat in their native haunts—and a lot of them are scavengers at times—they're given only the best here. No, that's not meant to be a boast. It's just good business. If we were to feed anything else we'd have a flock of sick stock on our hands."

"Do you think that the seals are the smartest of all animals, Captain Huling?"

The trainer regarded John with a quizzical smile.

"Listen," he answered. "I've just about got to believe it. Talk to 'most any seal-goofy chap and he'll swear it's a fact. Query Mabel Stark and she'll tell you that once you get to know tigers you'll agree

that they're the wisest heads in the business. Consult George Denman and he'll point to the elephants; or hunt up the Pallenbergs and they'll say 'Bears.' It's my personal opinion that if a trainer doesn't make his head work that way he might as well put the pedestals, tubs, and teeter boards in the storehouse and go to farming."

NOTE: Further advice had from Captain Huling following John Foster's visit to the menagerie states that Monty began to bark at the age of six months. "A bark similar to that of the adults," Captain Huling wrote, "only of a lighter and higher pitched tone. At about that time we gave him small live bait fish. He would play with these fish for hours together in the tank and end by chewing them into bits. As far as we could observe he did not swallow any of the fish until he was eleven months old. He is still nursing."

CHAPTER IX

THE BLOOD-SWEATING BEHEMOTH

IT WAS not until Captain Huling had left him alone and he had walked along the cages to the den of "The Largest Hippopotamus in Captivity" that John suddenly remembered that he had neglected to ask about Ben. And at the same moment Ben rejoined him.

"No," he said in answer to John's query, "this old lady is not the same hip that you saw being fed a couple of seasons ago. That was Fatima and she is in quarters this summer. This one's Martha. But when bran is provided she's served in the same way—wet balls of it tossed into her mouth. And if ever there was an animal that lives to eat you're pondering her now.

"Not a very wise bird either, as you'll conclude from a little study. Yes, you'll be entirely justified in basing a guess as to the amount of her gray matter on her expression and actions rather than on the size of her head. I've seen dead ones cut up at winter quarters and the brain isn't any bigger than my

fists. Still, like most fat folks the hip is always good-natured. Too lazy to be anything else."

"Do they really sweat blood?"

" 'The blood-sweating behemoth of holy writ,' " quoted Ben. "That's a line that I'm inclined to think owes its principal fame to circus men. At least it's been used in show bills for I can't tell you how long. Of course anybody familiar with the good book knows that Job tells about an animal that is generally supposed to have been the hippo of his day. But as to the blood-sweating part of the line I was quoting there are many who doubt the truth of it. Yet they're only part way justified. I say part way because a hip does ooze a fluid from its skin. Later on if you catch Martha after she's climbed out of her tub you'll likely see the stuff for yourself. Now you or I or anybody else might guess it to be blood sweat. But the pros tell me it hasn't got a thing to do with the veins or arteries, being just a sort of grape-juice-colored fluid that seeps out of the skin as if to keep the pores free. Ask me how it gets there and I'll tell you I don't know. But what I do know is that you won't find any thicker hide in a seven years' walk. I've seen some of it sliced and it's all of two inches through. The Arabs make whips and lacings from it and except for such purposes at home and amusing folks abroad the hip doesn't rate very far."

"But there are the tusks," John said.

"Score one for yourself," Ben nodded. "I overlooked them. Yet even they aren't in the demand they enjoyed when dentists used the stuff for teeth. Our show doc tells me that it was once in high favor, because differing from elephant ivory it doesn't turn as yellow and makes just the right-looking mouth furniture for humans. But then quite some time back a chemist who like as not had a grudge against the hippo butchers ups and invents porcelain as a whole lot cheaper and even prettier substitute. Referring to mouth furniture, Martha here has a fairly nice set in her dining room. Let's see if we can get her to open."

Ben made an upward swing with one arm. At the second attempt Martha's jaws swung apart. John counted six grinders on each side of the lower jaw and an equal number above.

"While the space they're set in forms the biggest mouth cavity of any animal on earth," Ben said, "and next to the elephant the hip is the largest critter that tramps it."

"But how did you get her to open up? You didn't say anything."

"She's used to seeing that arm motion when food balls are thrown to her," Ben explained. "If you don't fool her too often she'll open 'most every time. To get off our subject for a minute, that's

one of the ways trained animals are cued. The trainer starts with what you might call a broad cue, such as for example a full arm swing when tossing a piece of food. Then by working day after day with the animal he reduces the movement. Finally what started as a full arm swing gets to be nothing more than the flip of the hand or even the quick crooking of a finger with the arm hanging straight at the side. It's amazing to what slight motions cue signs can be reduced. That's why one expert trainer can watch another working an act and yet study for quite a while before detecting the signals. Take what can be classed as a great act—Alf Loyal's dogs, for example. Now I've heard other trainers own frankly enough that they've never been able to catch some of the cues Loyal uses. For one thing that is because Loyal, unlike most other trainers, is always on the go once he is in the ring—stepping high, waving his arms, never still. Yet mixed up with all his monkeyshines are the cues. Watch him when he's about to have one of his poodles do a certain trick and you'll see Loyal coaxing, pleading, begging, and turning loose more pantomime than a couple of clowns. At the end of a runway from which maybe he's going to do a somersault the dog stands wagging his tail and barking his head off. But he doesn't jump. No, sir! Not until somewhere camouflaged in that mess of tomfoolery he sees the

cue that he's been taught to look for. Then when he finally gets it—away he goes."

As Ben talked Martha had submerged herself in the tank. What he had learned two years before came back to John: how by closing its nostrils the hippopotamus can remain under water for several minutes at a time.

"Hips have another unusual sort of protection as well," Ben added. "Their ears are rigged with a set of muscles that allows them to open or close them as the need arises. The like of which I wish I had because dern me if I can ever go swimming without getting water on the ear."

"Same here," John declared.

"Guess the answer is that nothing that's created has all the worst of it," Ben mused. "Still I'll admit that I'd rather thumb the water out of my head after a swim than have been born with a face like Martha's. Every now and then an artist or a modeler will visit here in the menagerie to do a bit of drawing or clay lumping. They've told me that the giraffe is the doggonedest animal of all—'most everything about him reversed from what you have a right to expect; but that the hip comes next for nutty anatomy. Take around Martha's eyes. Now that space is concave in most animals, but your hippo prefers to wear bumps instead, like a lobster. The ear flaps are away too small for the rest

of the body, and if the tribe had anything to say about such matters at the start it's wheel to spoke they'd have put in a bid for legs a foot longer than the present ones. Also they probably would have ordered a nose and mouth several sizes smaller."

"Do they roar?" John asked.

"There, again, they're out of luck, for a nice round roar would be a right redeeming feature. Yet the best they can do is to grunt, something like a pig, only a little louder and a shade more shrill. That and the fact that they are connected with the porker family accounts for their menagerie moniker of 'the hogs.' "

CHAPTER X

THE MIRACLE OF BIG BILL

I HAVEN'T seen the armored rhinoceros cage anywhere," John said, as he and Ben left Martha to her bath.

"And you won't," Ben replied. "Big Bill died the season after you were with us. Not likely that you would have read of his demise though there were stories about his passing in the Texas papers at the time. Considering his importance, Bill deserved a lot wider notice. But when Bill never did know how to sell himself to the public. Had he been a movie lion or a knife and fork chimp of the kind that you see touring in vaudeville he'd have been copy everywhere. But Bill wasn't spectacular, his only claim to fame being that for more than twenty years he was the only one of his kind in America, certainly the finest specimen of one-horned rhino anywhere in captivity and one of the very few of his genius existing either in or outside of a cage. Perch yourself on that bucket top there and I'll tell you about him."

Ben seated himself on another upturned pail and filled his pipe.

"Big Bill," he began, "was the best head that ever traveled with this or any other menagerie. In fact until he got the asthma the winter before he died he never through his whole life ever gave trouble to anybody. Not that Bill had the kindly eye. On the contrary he had as wicked a pair as were ever mis-set in a cranium. I put it that way because it always seemed to me that a rhino's eyes were screwed in a good half foot off center—'way too far toward the nose. Besides that, as in most of his kinfolks, the eyes were small for his bulk and usually bloodshot, as though marking Bill for being far from what he actually was, namely, a temperate animal of good and regular habits.

"I know what I am talking about because Bill and I were acquainted for twenty years—or from when he first joined out. That was with the Ringling show in the days when, as I've mentioned before, it was a separate concern. I can't say that Bill and I were pals from the start, or for that matter that the friendship was ever anything more than a one-sided affair. For your rhino isn't what you'd call demonstrative. Still I always liked to think that Bill wasn't exactly bored when I'd pay him a visit or maybe bring him an extra apple or an onion. Indeed, I'm sure he never was. He had too much hard

sense for that. In fact, if you can say there are such among animals. Bill was a philosopher. I base that assertion on the observation that right from the start he apparently made up his mind that he was to be a trouser for the rest of his life. He didn't fret, and as one of our two-legged philosophers has said in speaking of himself, 'he ate what was sot before him.' Bill took his meals deliberately, munched well and enjoyed good digestion. Nor did he ever rant around the cage while other animals were being fed or get impatient because he wasn't given the top slice.

"His scoff? Oh, hay, bran, chopped vegetables—Big Bill salad, as we used to call it—alfalfa, of which he was especially fond, and meal. Washed down with plenty of water. It was nothing for Bill to put away twenty-five gallons in a day.

"Bill always had an entire den to himself. Sort of bachelor's hall as you might say, for nobody ever went inside except the boys who swept out the cage. Now in the thickets the average rhino is a tough customer. In fact it may be said that Pickett's stuff at Gettysburg never had anything on a rhino's charge. He can outrun a man. Not, of course, in the short length of a den because it takes a certain distance to shift into high. But you can guess how easy it would have been for Bill to have jammed a man against the wall; especially when he took on his

full weight, which ran close to three tons. But as I've remarked, Bill must have been a philosopher and so probably couldn't see any reason for musing up his housekeeper. The nudge from a broom was always enough to send him to one end of his quarters while the other end was being swept out. The same was true when now and then his horn got ragged from hitting against the bars and so had to be trimmed down, same as you'd trim the hoof of a horse. Bill always stood for the manicuring.

"Still he wasn't sluggish. At times and even in his old age he was as frisky as a calf. On occasions he would cavort up and down and whisk his short tail and wiggle his hair-fringed ears. At such moments he was a comical sight to see—like a scarecrow suddenly coming to life and deciding to dance. Or, to get nearer to it, like an old retired show horse hearing a band and shaking the bone bag. And Bill wasn't any more light footed. When he pulled one of his hoe-downs he put that big cage of his through a perfect imitation of a veteran passenger coach on a bend when the engineer is late and trying to make up a little time. It used to sway and creak exactly like that. Then Bill would stop as suddenly as he had begun, settle down in one corner, and look no more animated than a bale of hay.

"Lad," Ben continued, "do you know I used to figure that sometimes when Bill danced when the

crowd was here it was because he had been egged on by the fact that folks practically ignored him? Down by the monkey cage you'd see people gathered like folks around a kid show ballyhoo. Looking at what? Looking at monks not worth more than an average of thirty dollars apiece. And there would be Bill, whose owners had turned down an offer of thirty thousand, playing to less than a half-dozen visitors. And maybe one of them saying, 'Oh, look at the hippopotamus!' No wonder that Bill once in a while got the advertising idea through that thickest of all animal skulls of his. Needless to tell you that what Bill thought—if he ever thought at all—is merely to be put down as the ravings of the old duffer who's just now relating his story. Just the same I never heard a man telling a little boy that Bill was a hippo without getting mad clear through. More than once I've contrived to speak out of turn and so managed to set some youngster right and give Big Bill his due.

"Anyhow, such was Bill's fare and fate leading up to the latter part of his life. As he grew older he became subject to colds. But plenty of onions, fed raw, always brought him around. And I'll add in case you think I'm inclined to give Bill too human a twist that he probably didn't eat the onions because he thought they were good for what ailed

him. No, he ate them because he was simply dotty over them at all times. For Bill never had any company manners when it came to onions. He'd sink all you'd feed him—cold or no cold, party or no party.

"I was saying that he always got over his colds. Which is true up until the show was stowed away at Bridgeport in the fall of '26. Then Bill developed one that wouldn't be red-lighted. It hung on and finally turned into what sounded like a switch engine suffering from double asthma. Bill wintered in an apartment a little larger than his traveling den and which was built into one corner of Old Andrew's room. We called the room that at the quarters because besides Bill it was occupied by the spotted girls and Andrew and all of Andrew's personal menagerie. Andrew was supposed to sleep there and since his bed was tucked over in one corner, he no doubt did. But how he managed it, only he can tell you. Because you could hear Bill's breathing pretty near over to the quarters office.

" 'He not so bad last night,' Andrew would say. 'Oh, yah, I get used to noise. I t'ink he better soon.'

"So with Andrew as day and night nurse and the cat barn veterinary as the consulting doc they worked on Bill through the winter. Besides the onions, they gave him hot mashes and cooked meal. I can tell you it was nip and tuck at times. But Bill

was a good patient. He was seldom fussy and always easy to feed. Still the philosopher; and so he pulled through.

"Come spring again and once under canvas with plenty of fresh air, the old boy looked as good as new. I won't say that he was as lively on those occasions when he did show friskiness. Personally I never saw him do the hoe-down again though Andrew has told me that he put on the dance one afternoon just after we got into Texas. He looked well enough when we played Dallas. I recall seeing and talking to him that day—Monday, the twenty-seventh of September. Which was the last time I ever saw the old scout alive.

"That night Bill was bedded as usual, side doors buttoned on and the den tarpaulined. The run was a short one—thirty miles to Fort Worth—so we were in early and the cages in the menagerie a bit sooner than in the average stand. But getting opened up an hour or so earlier than usual didn't mean anything to Bill. Because when the shutters were taken down the boys found him dead.

"I wasn't present," Ben went on after he had thumbed the tobacco into his brier, "but they say it looked as though he had passed out only a little while before. He was stretched on his side in the hay and while he had bled from the nose there was nothing to indicate a struggle. At the age of

twenty-two years, which is a prime one for a rhino, and after having trouped upward of a half-million miles, Bill had died as he had lived—without giving trouble to anybody.”

“Did you bury him there?” John asked.

“On the contrary he was never buried at all. To tell the truth after his death a sort of miracle happened to Bill: meaning that he turned into two rhinos where there’d been only one before.”

Ben paused and from his bucket top eyed John in solemn silence.

“The truth, so help me. But before I get on with that part of the story we’ve got to go back a few years. You’ve been in the Field Museum here in Chicago?”

“Three times,” John said.

“And like as not heard of the Museum of Natural History in New York. Now you know that we open at Madison Square Garden every spring and during the weeks we’re in town there’s always sure to be callers from the American Museum. Some of its staff and our bosses are mighty close friends. Especially around the animal department for of course it’s that part of the trick that interests them most. To see our boys and a couple of profs hobnobbing in front of a cage and discussing this and that about some particular animal, you’d never guess unless somebody told you which was the duck with

a ten-car show of D. Z.'s hooked to his name and which with nothing but an M. S.—meaning 'Mud Showman'—coupled to his.

"A cracking fine lot of men, those docs," Ben declared, "and though maybe you wouldn't think it, every bit as fond of a live animal as they are of a dead one that's ready to stuff. Still they always have an eye peeled for the main chance and so there had for a long time been an understanding that if anything ever happened to Big Bill they were to have him.

"So to get back to Fort Worth, it wasn't an hour until a telegram was on its way to the American Museum. In less than another an answer came back and I can tell you it was a regretful one. For of course a man would have to be sent to handle the body and as it turned out they had no field men available.

"Well, for a time it looked—just as you've suggested—as though Bill would be buried right there in Fort Worth. Then Carl Hathaway got the hunch that maybe Peabody Institute might want Bill—you know, the big museum located at Yale. Off went another wire and before noon there came a reply from New Haven that read something like this:

"'Want Bill by all means. Can you ice body? If so will send man by first train.'

"Ice him!" Ben repeated. "A large order for a carcass the size of Bill's. But Carl Hathaway always was friends with emergencies. So the first thing he did was to find out from where the show was getting the cold stuff that day and in a couple of cat winks it had been fixed for the Texas Ice Company to take charge of the remains. A truck did the rest and by midafternoon Bill was stretched out over a half-dozen blocks of ice with a lot of the loose stuff packed in around him, and an answer shot to Peabody reading:

" 'Bill in cold storage at Texas Ice Company plant, Fort Worth.'

"Back comes the reply, 'Many thanks. T. A. James leaving for Fort Worth this evening.'

" 'Why, that's Tom James,' Carl said, and of course most of us who'd ever been around the Bridgeport quarters knew Tom James. For Bridgeport and New Haven being but a few miles apart he'd often been a visitor and skinned more than one animal that had passed on to the happy feeding grounds.

" 'Tom will make a good job of it,' everybody said. And he did. I wasn't there to see him at work. Don't believe I'd have cared to be. And anyhow, Fort Worth being a one-day stand we were up in Oklahoma by the time Tom got to Texas. Months afterward he told me about those three days and

the most part of that many nights spent in the ice house. For he had to work right where Bill lay.

“‘It wasn’t exactly like being at the pole,’ Tom said, ‘yet on the other hand you wouldn’t have called it a balmy atmosphere. Further than that the difficulty was increased by the fact that the hide and flesh had frozen inward to a depth of four inches. On top of this I experienced much trouble in getting anyone to help me. I’d hire first one and then another man until I’d tried out three or four; but after an hour or so they would one by one drop out. Finally along came a colored boy. I recall that I contracted to pay Sam five dollars a day and to make sure of him I promised him a bonus if he would see me through. He stuck like a soldier and with him for a helper I removed the hide, dismembered the skeleton, and cleaned the bones. I never handled an animal that gave such an impression of dead weight. The packing was no small chore in itself for when we weighed the cases for shipment to New Haven the weight was found to be exactly one thousand and seventy-eight pounds. But through the whole job Sam proved a trump. I’ll always remember what he said when I paid him off.

“‘“If you-all ever got another one of them rhinohipposus to skin I’ll be right here, Mister James.”’

““Sam,” I answered, “there just isn’t any other.””

“And Tom James was right,” ended Ben, “for there never will be another Bill. He had a spirit and a personality all his own.”

“But about making two rhinos out of him,” John reminded. “You said that——”

“I did,” Ben assented, “and I meant it. Go to Peabody Institute to-day and you’ll see Bill there, standing just as I’ve often seen him in his den. Only what you’ll find won’t be all Bill but just his shell. Inside—though naturally enough you can’t see it—he’s chock-a-block with stuffing. Not a bone left. Then shift your gaze a bit to the right and you’ll see Bill’s skeleton. And both are rightly enough labeled, ‘Big Bill.’”

CHAPTER XI

WITH THE HYENAS

AND now," Ben announced as he and John drew up in front of a blue and silver cage, "your eyes are resting on something that's nothing short of historic. Yes, siree, John Foster, you're at this moment looking at present-day relatives of what was the first wild animal ever owned by the Ringling Brothers."

"Hyenas!" John exclaimed as he peered into the den.

"The Zekes they are and a Zeke it was that figuratively speaking fathered this whole traveling zoo."

Another filling of the brier and John knew that a story was brewing.

"In the first place," Ben said through the smoke, "you've got to remember that the Ringlings weren't circus owners at the start. Not that they didn't have that port in mind, but it takes important money to outfit even a small mud opera. And being little more than boys—two of them still in their teens—

they were originally as shy of the needful as a new giraffe of a strange corral. So to capture the necessary they organized themselves into what they called the Ringling Bros. Classic and Comic Concert Company and descended on the tanks of Wisconsin, Iowa and Minnesota. They were pretty much the whole works, those five brothers; being their own orchestra, street band, jugglers, clog dancers, and the actors in the skit that concluded their program. They went from town to town on trains and when sometimes a snowslide got in the way they took to teams, or not being able to find a rig fought their way through the drifts on foot so as not to miss a date just ahead.

“That was back in the years of 1882, '83 and the late winter of '84. From the very beginning they gave good shows, they made money, and they saved it. So it came about that in May of '84 they opened their first circus at Baraboo. Only the outfit didn't belong to them but was leased from Yankee Robinson, who as you probably know was a famous showman in those far-away days. But though merely leased the trick gave them experience, and keeping it out until September, they made more money. Still, the circus season over with, don't you suppose those brothers laid off during the winter months. Not for a short minute. Once things were stored in quarters out they went again with their concert

company, playing in halls, empty storerooms—even in barns when nothing else was to be had.

“Meanwhile every dollar went toward fitting out what was to be their own circus. Thus they battled in and out of the sleet, snow and villages through most of the winter of ’85 and ’86 and with part of the money they made bought two cages to add to the other equipment that had been got together at Baraboo—cages that weren’t much bigger than watch charms compared with these you see here now. Just what was to go in the dens they didn’t exactly know. But something was bound to turn up. They were confident of that.

“The plan was to take that first show of their own on the road as soon as the next spring broke and so it was agreed that Al and Otto should remain at home to whip things into shape. Then John, Charles and Aft T. struck out for the lumber camps to entertain the loggers and add to the exchequer. The camps were prosperous so that when after an absence of seven weeks the trio headed back to Baraboo they knew that they had a welcome surprise for the two who had stayed behind.

“‘How much?’ Alf T. once told me was Otto’s first question when he met them at the depot. And it was likely to be in those days, for Otto Ringling was the treasurer and there was many a time when dreams far exceeded the bankroll. So when they

said 'Six hundred dollars' it was easy to see that they hadn't reckoned wrong on handing out a surprise.

" 'Great!' Otto said. 'Now come on down to the quarters and we'll show you our little surprise.'

"He and Al led the way to the barn that served both as a carpenter shop and storage loft and where the new cages had been housed. The boys saw something moving in one of the dens.

" 'A hyena!' exclaimed Charles, as they came up to the bars.

" 'Hyena!' repeated Otto, who had been consulting the dictionary. 'Yes, and a whole lot more. It's a Hyena Striata Gigantium, that's what it is; and it's all ours.'

"A whoop went up and that same night Alf T., who wrote most of the show bills, turned out what to my way of thinking has had no equal, either before or since. I heard him repeat the wording more than once in later years and this is pretty close to the way it went:

"HIDEOUS HYENA STRIATA GIGANTIUM!
TO BE SEEN ONLY WITH THE RINGLING SHOW!

"THE MIDNIGHT MARAUDING MAN-EATING MONSTROSITY! THE PROWLING, GRAVE-ROBBING DEMON OF ALL CREATED THINGS, WHO, WHILE THE WORLD SLEEPS AND NO HAND IS RAISED TO STAY HIS AWFUL

DEPREDACTIONS, SNEAKS STEALTHILY UNDER COVER OF DARKNESS TO THE CEMETERY AND WITH GHOULISH GLEE ROBS THE TOMB. HIS HIDEOUS, BLOOD-CURDLING LAUGHTER PARALYZES WITH TERROR THE BRAVEST HEARTS. HE LEAVES BEHIND HIM A TRAIL OF BLOOD, AND THE WAILS OF THE DYING ARE MUSIC TO HIS EARS!"

"Whew!" John whistled.

"A whole row of 'em," Ben laughed. "But that was great showmanship back there in the unsophisticated '80's. And if you think it over carefully, the bill didn't say anything that wasn't fairly true. For hyenas certainly do laugh, they've been known to rob graves, and I'm guessing that if you happened to be loafing around a bone yard at midnight and heard one start yodeling your old spine jelly would jiggle a bit.

"Obviously enough, though, that brand of hyena billing wouldn't work to-day. For while that lone Zeke of forty years ago was a prime feature, his present kinfolks by comparison with what surrounds them here don't rank as more than a twelfth-rate exhibit. They're merely thought of as the Zekes, as the menagerie boys call all hyenas. That or 'the dogs.'

"A hard-looking outfit but how they can crack a bone! The joints never seem to come too big for

them. I've seen bones left by Buster or Mars raked out of their cages and watched Avery here go through them like so many toothpicks. Got marvelous mouths, have hyenas; with an amazingly large muscle that works the lower jaw. And those big tearing teeth are so finely matched that they can snip a piece of paper exactly as though you had cut it with a pair of scissors."

"They make a noise like Old Deacon when they walk," John noted.

"And for the same reason. They can't draw their claws back into their feet. Homely footgear, eh?"

"I'd say they were homely all over," John decided.

"Yet not quite as bad as they look," Ben said. "Take Avery. He's as friendly as a tramp cur looking for a pal. Try him and see. Shake, Avery!"

John put up his hand and at the first invitation the hyena thrust his paw between the bars.

"Avery's the only one I've ever known to shake hands," Ben admitted, "but he never fails to respond."

"Do they laugh very often?"

"You might hang around for days and not get a ruffle out of them. Then, unexpectedly, that spotted boy over in the corner will start peeling and keep it up at intervals for half an hour, and all the while doing a crazy sort of dance. Though considering

his jib the devil only knows what he's got to laugh about. And so far as I have been able to observe it's only the spotted hyena that laughs—never the striped or the brown ones. Now some claim that when a hyena starts chortling it's a sure sign that rain will follow. But I can't put much stock in that because I recall that ours here put on what sounded like a regular contest when we were around Tucson, Arizona, one September. Keep a check on them and you're likely to find that they're as apt to laugh in desert territory as along the coast.

"Yet if rain doesn't follow something else is bound to. That's the lions. Just as sure as your hyena starts to whoop the big cats will start to roar and keep it up until you can't hear yourself think."

"But is it real, sure-enough laughing?"

"As near it as anything else with which you might make comparison. I'd say it was like laughter of the hysterical brand—a string of quick hoots with a quality of tone like music when you put tissue paper over a comb. Or take any jazz orchestra and a lot of the wind it gets off its chest is for all the world like a couple of Zekes laughing in unison."

"What sound do the others make?"

"Howl. At a little distance you could easily mistake their voices for so many dogs. Of course they're all of the dog family," Ben added, "meaning be-

sides the Fidos, the wolf, coyote, jackal, and fox—though widely differing from the rest in several ways. On one point you can never go wrong and that's the way a hyena slopes down toward the rear quarters. Like a giraffe, his hind legs look to be shorter than the front ones, which puts a low shuffle in his gait. As Smithy used to say, it was the Zekes that first put the ink in slink.

"Besides that, glance at the width of the forehead and the powerful chest and shoulders as though all the strength had left the after end and moved forward. And even friendly old Avery has the bleary eye as though there was a milky film over it. They tell me all animal scavengers have bleary lamps—even to the birds."

"I guess they're the ugliest looking animals in the menagerie," John said.

"Possibly, and I can't say that trying to make them live a decent life seems to help much. They get nothing but fresh meat, their dens are kept as clean as the rest of the cages, and yet there's no apparent improvement. Nevertheless I can't help but wonder if, given the right kind of a mate, Avery might not in time become the granddaddy of a fairly respectable set of children. But speaking of ugly animals come along and set your eyes on what from my angle is one of the homeliest dudes among the four-foots."

CHAPTER XII

REGGIE, THE GNU

THEY had moved along the "grand oval" until they stood before the hay cage of Reggie, the gnu.

"Not named after any keeper," Ben warned, "because nobody named Reginald could be around a cat house very long—and live. No, Reggie was just naturally given that moniker because of the way he parts his horns. I never see him without thinking of some old fop who's lost most of his good looks and then piles on the haberdashery to make up for it. Why I feel that way I can't tell you for aside from the funny way in which the horns spread at the base giving the effect of hair plastered down and parted in the center, there's no point in particular. You've just got to sense the comparison for yourself.

"Anyhow, there stands Reggie, the gnu. Even his family name is a laugh just in itself. I recall that when Reggie first arrived there was a freshly joined out cage man stationed up there near the marquee. A fussy old dame who was peering over her specs

at a program asked him what there was new in the menagerie.

“‘Well,’ he says, ‘there’s the gnu that’s new.’

“‘How’s that, young man?’

“‘The new gnu,’ he repeats. ‘Down farther along——’

“But the old lady had flounced off. Thought she was being kidded, I guess. But however that may have been, somebody certainly kidded the entire family of gnu when they were first put together. For hold your hand so as to shut out his head and you might suppose you were looking at the aft portion of a pony. Now reverse the process and you’d think from the head that the cage contained a South African buffalo. For all I know it’s this misfit arrangement that causes Reggie to do such a wholesale lot of kicking at times. Now and again he’ll start prancing and then has a way of letting go with his feet toward all quarters of the compass at once.”

“Say, but he’s got funny eyebrows,” John laughed.

“Everything about him is queer,” Ben rejoined, “though I don’t know whether we’d be justified in calling that scraggly sprinkling of white hairs by the name of eyebrows. Anything that’s a brow ought to be confined to a spot above the eye while his, you’ll notice, circle all the way around both lamps.

"And speaking of voices, as we were back there at the Zeke dens, Reggie has a strange one. Maybe you've read about a gnu bellowing, but like a lot of single words used to describe things, that only approximates the sound. For instance a milk cow bellows but her wail and Reggie's aren't any more alike than a cowbell is like a church bell. Now my own way of defining voices is probably a loony one and if you feel a laugh coming don't hold it in. For while I've never tried the experiment and like as not never will, I'd say that if a fellow got a big piece of bamboo, waited until Jim Tarver, the side-show giant, had a cold and then got Jim to cough into the end of the tube you'd hear a sound that would come pretty near imitating Reggie's pipes in action. What, no laughter?

"Then I'll tell you another," Ben said. "Take the crowned crane. He honks like an auto horn. And see that pretty little Indian antelope in the next cage from Reggie? He makes a sound as delicate as his own trim ankles. To my ear it's exactly like the first part of a kitten's meow—as though it were started and then swallowed when it was halfway 'meowed.' He'll start that call and keep it up for ten minutes at a stretch. And just as the tiger's voice is the most mournful in the menagerie, his is the prettiest."

"Does he make it often?"



"It's only the spotted hyena that laughs."



"Brought down to be dusted for the reception."



*"You'd guess that a couple of tons of sandpaper had come to life
and started to frolic."*

"Almost every evening—along about dusk. You might call him the vesper sparrow of the menagerie. And in a spot like this you'll often hear him at night when the lights are low.—Say! That's an idea! Where are you going to sleep to-night?"

"Why, at home. There's a train at 9:30 and I thought——"

"Nonsense," Ben expostulated. "Why not kip right here in the cat house? I want to tell you that you'll get an entirely new slant on a lot of things. Kip with the elephant men. What do you say if we go and fix it with George Denman?"

"Whillikers, but that would be great!" John agreed. "I could send a telegram to Dad that I'd not be back until to-morrow."

"Signed and sealed," Ben pronounced. "Let's go stalk George."

CHAPTER XIII

A MAN OF MYSTERY

THEY found the boss elephant man seated in the open end of a boxed red wagon spotted outside the menagerie tent but within a dozen steps of the elephant line. A canvas fly shaded the desk at which he sat writing and on the ground beneath the awning John recognized the very chair in which he had sat when George Denman had told him the story of Old John's pilgrimage.

Indeed, the scene within the bull men's compound skirted with its canvas wall varied little if at all from that of two years before: There was the rest tent with its cots, wardrobe boxes, and its water barrel; the mirrors that dangled against the side poles, and in the yard of the inclosure the wash-stands and wash basins perched upon their rows of blue painted jacks.

From the sides of the wagon swung the plow harness—made of chain and covered with canvas—used for the working elephants that pulled; or

here and there huge canvas pads for the heads of those that pushed their loads. Inside the wagon you saw books, a cot, trunks, a radio, and chairs. The walls were variously decorated with pictures. Gold-braided caps and coats hung from a half dozen hooks.

There was ample time to note these details for the visitors waited until the writer should look up from his desk.

"We'll see if he remembers you," Ben had suggested.

They approached the edge of the awning and as they did George Denman glanced toward them.

"Howdy, Ben," he waved. Then his eyes lighting on John he swung around in his chair.

"Well, Jiggledy Moses!" he added, laying down the pen and putting his arms akimbo. "Bring a bucket and sponge with you?"

Plainly enough, George Denman did remember; and the next minute Ben had put the proposition of adding another bull man for the night watch.

"Sure," the boss agreed. "We'll let him sleep on an elephant's breakfast, eh Ben? Never mind what that is—you'll find out soon enough. Have a seat while I finish this letter."

"Much obliged," Ben said, "but I think I'll go change my runners and get my map ironed out before the flag goes up. See you later, John."

"Seems to have taken quite a shine to you," remarked a voice at John's elbow, as Ben disappeared around the end of the compound. John looked up to see Carl Hathaway, with whom he had sat at the staff table in the cook tent on his first visit to the big show.

"Well, if it's animal stuff you're after you couldn't have had better luck," Carl Hathaway declared as he dropped into a chair. "I never knew a man who liked to fool around animals the way Ben Bow does."

"Just who is he, Mr. Hathaway?" John asked.

"Now you may think it a strange thing, but I can't tell you—except, of course, to say he's just Ben Bow. I can't because I don't know. I doubt if anybody does. Ben's been over here ever since the two shows were put together and was with the Ringling show off and on for a long while prior to the combine. And all through those years he's been a mystery. He's worked in different departments but oddly enough never on animals, though it's around them that you're almost certain to pick him up when he's got his own work done."

"But hasn't anybody ever tried to find out about him?"

"If you mean did anybody ever put the question to him—yes. Myself for one. I remember a rainy

Sunday afternoon with the show up and not many of us on the lot. Ben was working on baggage stock that season, 'cuffing horses around,' as he called it. I happened to be in Happy Jack's rest tent when Ben passed shaking the water from his slicker. There was an oil stove in the tent and I asked him in. We gassed away for an hour or more with Ben doing most of the talking. Somehow the conversation turned to universities and like as not before he realized it he had said something about when he 'took his degree.'

" 'Look here, Ben,' I said a minute later, 'what's your story, anyhow?'

"He looked at me a little queerly for a second, then got up and lit that black pipe of his.

" 'You wouldn't be interested,' he said, and left the tent.

"And I know just what he meant," Carl Hathaway concluded. "He meant that it was none of my business. And it wasn't; or isn't. He always behaves himself and if the show's short of help you'll see him doing the work of three ordinary men. So what more can you ask of any trouser?"

"Offered him a job on elephants one spring," George Denman volunteered as he sealed his letter. "Always hanging around them and I thought he'd jump at the chance. What do you suppose he said?"

'Fraid maybe he'd have to use a hook on one of them!'"

"I can understand that," Carl Hathaway nodded. "Chicken hearted all through. Yet I've heard that in the old days with the Ringling show when a gang of toughs brickbatted the working men on a get-away night down Baltimore way, he laid out four in a row."

"Five," George Denman corrected. "Well, guess I'll go hunt a mail box. You see me around 10:30, Foster, and we'll fix you up. Put you along with Dave. He can tell you a lot of yarns."

"You'll have plenty of company," Carl Hathaway remarked as the boss elephant man left them. "There are twenty-four men on elephants and George likes to have all of them sleep on the lot. Three of the herd leaders, that is to say the assistants who handle the three big herds in performance, bunk on cots in the menagerie track—one at either end and one opposite the middle of the line. The rest of the boys sleep in rows between them."

"I suppose that's Mr. Denman's place," John said as he again noted the cot at the rear of the wagon.

"Never anywhere else—at least in a week stand or when the show is playing a Monday town and so spends Sunday night on the lot."

"But wouldn't the elephants be all right with just a part of the men on watch?"

"Ten to one, yes; and one to ten, no. And it's because of that one chance that something might go wrong that a wise superintendent of elephants insists upon full protection. Step out here. There—see that group of stakes?"

"I saw them awhile ago," John answered, "and not seeing any guy ropes tied to them I was going to ask what they were for."

"Those are what we call 'wind stakes,'" Carl Hathaway said. "Now an entire season might go by without them ever being needed, but they are driven just the same. Here's the reason: Suppose a bad wind or an electrical storm comes up. Elephants don't like wind and they don't like pounding rain or lightning. In fact they don't cotton to anything that they can't see or feel and so aren't able to figure out. Mystery always troubles them. Yet suppose a racket of that kind breaks loose in the middle of the night. If it's merely a mild storm of short duration the men can handle them right where they stand. But if there promises to be the least chance of trouble, George has the side wall raised, the bulls are marched out, chained to those wind stakes and faced into the storm. A few men couldn't manage that job but with the full quota here it's no trick at all. Safety first," Carl Hathaway con-

cluded, "which, by the way, is a phrase that was practiced here a long while before it began to be popularized on placards."

"But the other animals don't have a watch at night, do they?" John asked. "I mean besides the giraffes?"

"Not so numerous a one, but a watch just the same. Suppose a zebra got down in the night and mixed up with a halter rope? It might break a leg or even its neck. The same thing could happen to a young camel. On top of that, though the chance is more remote, a quarrel might start in one of the cages. Or when, occasionally, an animal is under the weather and grows restless, a word from a keeper will often quiet him. Left to whine alone he'd probably have the whole menagerie in an uproar. And the show's animals must have their rest just as humans must have theirs."

"There surely is no end of things to find out about," John said.

Carl Hathaway chuckled.

"Don't get discouraged. Just keep on excavating, as your friend Ben would say. How are you putting in the time between now and to-night?"

"No special way."

"Well, there's no objection to you visiting around the back yard. Like as not you'll run across a lot of old friends there and I'm guessing from the way

you stand with Fred Bradna that he'll let you sit in front of the band and watch the show. Meantime what do you say if we go over to Mr. Webb's emporium and see if he will stake a couple of old showmen to a bite of lunch."

CHAPTER XIV

NIGHT IN THE MENAGERIE

DURING the hours that intervened between lunch at the cook tent and his appointment with George Denman, John Foster renewed his acquaintance with many of those whom he had met on his former visit to the back yard: Miss Leitzel and Miss Wirth; "Butterfly" Fred Stelling, Jules Turnour, and the host of clowns in clown alley; Jenny Rooney, who had been the Cinderella Lady of that other season; Fred Bradna—yes, John told him, he still had the whistle; Pat Valdo and many others. It was great the way they all remembered a fellow.

Next had come snatches of the performance seen from a chair near the band stand. Supper at the staff table. More of the show at night; and then, the races and the concert over with, back to the menagerie to meet the boss elephant man.

No sooner had the last straggler been urged through the marquee than preparations for the night were begun in the cat house. The incandescents that had illuminated the cages were now

switched off. Out went the chandeliers that swung from the center poles. Only a few stand lights, suggesting street lamps on a foggy night, were left to shed their pale rays across the breadth and along the length of the tent.

Dim, melting shadows flitted uncertainly to be swallowed in the dark pockets between cage ends or to seep upward to blend with the cathedral-like gloom that enveloped the region overhead.

Into a part of this unseen region stretched the necks of Annie and Louisa, giving, at a first glance, the curious effect of giraffes without heads. Yet the heads were still intact. John noted that as Old Andrew began forking the night's feed into their lofty mangers; for the mangers brimming, the spotted girls thrust their noses into the clover.

Those were some of the things that made the flitting shadows: Andrew's arms as he heaved the fork; the movements of quick cage men lowering the shutters that were partially to close the dens for the night; the weaving elephants; the swaying of a camel; the stamping of feet along convict row.

Voices punctuated the gloom—not loud, but low like the lights: words spoken to animals, an order from an assistant boss, and then George Denman summoning the watcher.

"Time to bring in the beds," he called. "Want to lend a hand?"

"Yes, sir," John answered. He followed the boss around Old John, under the side wall, and into the open. Here another stand lamp shed its eerie light. They passed the herd leaders carrying cots. Other men were gathering up armloads of hay.

"There," George Denman directed, "grab a hunk and follow Dave inside with it. He'll sleep along with you, Dave."

"Sure," answered the bull man. "Got all you can handle? Let's go."

"Now can I help with the beds?" John asked as they deposited their loads on the menagerie track a few feet out from the elephant line.

"These is our beds," Dave retorted as he kicked the hay into an even layer. "What'd you suppose you was going to draw? A davenport couch? That's our mattress just as she lays. Of course if you'd sooner go over to the Blackstone——"

"Where'll I get some more hay?" John demanded. "From the same place?"

"Kid, you're all right," Dave approved. "We'll make a cat house chambermaid out of you yet."

They returned to the pile and were now joined by a dozen other men who having hayed the line for the night began to carry in their own bedding.

"Now we'll add the snowy white sheets," Dave announced as John helped him unfold and spread a thickness of tarpaulin over the hay. "Next the

blankets and a pair of pillows and you and me's fixed for sweet dreams.

"Don't know how much you'll sleep," he added as the bed making was completed, "but when you get home you can tell the folks that you kipped on an elephant's breakfast. And that won't be no lie for it's what we'll do with our pads in the morning. Sure! Feed 'em to the old rubber mules."

"I'll bet they'll be hungry by then," John guessed.

"Wouldn't exactly say that because most of 'em eat through the night. Pickings get mighty slim by daylight but they's always tapping along the ground hunting for crumbs. Don't want to turn in yet, do you?"

"I should say not—that is if it will be all right to stay up."

"Sure! Long as you want. Let's prowls the line."

As they neared Old John, George Denman again came under the side wall to make a final survey before going to his wagon.

"Don't be keeping Dave up all night," he warned, "and if you've got to talk an arm off make it his left one."

"I will, Mr. Denman. Thanks a lot for letting me stay!"

"Chattering about the eats," Dave said as they brought up at the end of the line, "Old John here's

always mighty deliberate. He's got clover now, for, like all the working elephants as against them that's performers, he gets the best of it on scoff. Watch him now. See how he's sorting out the chuck for himself? Does it with the finger at the end of his trunk. Likes the blossom ends best. But that don't mean he'll leave any of the rest. 'Fore night's over he'll have the ground cleaned up like as though a street sweeper had gone over it. Sure!

"John always was fussy about his feed. Particular as all get out and likes everything fresh and sweet. Now Albert up there is a crazy taster. Eats tobacco and likes it and even gets a kick out of stowing junk in his mouth—like old nails, sticks and pebbles. One day in parade he trunked over into the gutter and come up with a three-inch cigar butt. Sure! Brought it all the way back to the lot stuck in his lip."

"Will they keep right on eating until everything is gone?" John asked.

"Pretty near all of 'em. But there's exceptions. Like Rosie here. There's times when she'll snooze between snacks. You can always tell when that idea's starting to work as you'll see her reaching around and getting what's left of her hay in a pile."

"For a bed?"

"Naw!" Dave corrected. "To keep Joe who's next her from hooking it. Pretty near all of 'em are

moochers. Don't make no difference how high their own hay pile is they'll always try to sneak from a neighbor. Juno up there is always stealing from Katie, or trying to. Sure! Take it when the gang has had oats. Then maybe it comes along time for the doors to open so of course they's got to be brought down to be dusted off for the reception. We bring all of 'em down that will come and broom 'em. And when it comes Katie's turn you can bet she'll always manage to slue around so's to lay on all that's left of her oats. I see her do that lots of times, with Juno all the time waiting and hoping that Katie will leave some uncovered. Sure, got plenty of her own. Just like a farmer's kid swiping watermelons, I guess. Thinks they taste better than his dad's."

"Won't all the elephants come down to be swept off?"

"Not by a coo-coo hoot they won't. Rio wouldn't lay down for a week at a time, either at the cars or on the lot. Sometimes he'd lean against the side of the car but never go to the floor. We used to have an elephant named Gypsy that never would fold her legs. The boss used to put her in a ditch if there happened to be a deep enough one near the lot so's she could lounge against it to snooze. Sure!

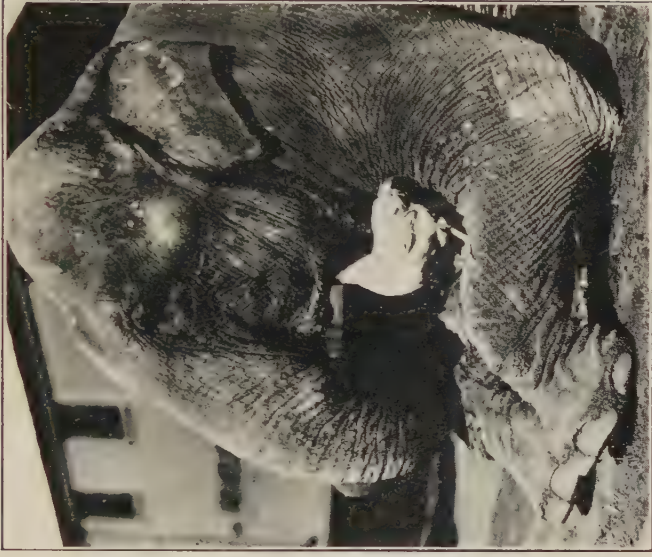
"Now some'll argue that's a sign a bull's sick—got something wrong inside that keeps whispering

that if he ever goes down he'll never get up. And it sure is a fact that when one's so sick that even a blind man could tell it, he's for staying on his pins every time. I've seen 'em that way at winter quarters; especially old elephants that appear to be about ready to cash in anyhow. What you'd want to do if you was a greeny would be to get him down—put him to bed same as you would a pal. But a experienced bull man won't never try it. He knows an elephant like that is wise to what's best and would a lot rather do his battling standing up. Far as that goes he pretty often wins out, gets back into shape and troupes good as new.

"But if you stayed up late enough to-night you'd see that all these in the line would be down more or less at one time or another. Only mostly they just cat-nap, the little shavers taking more rest than the old heads. See Mabel over there? She's just a punk and is already down. That youngster standing next to her is Joyce. Sometimes he pulls a funny one. Hope he'll do it to-night on your account."

"Do they ever sleep daytimes?"

"Most of 'em don't seem to want to. Looks as if long as people are moving around something tells 'em to keep an eye out. Just the same I've seen Trilby and once in a while Modock sleep standing up even when the menagerie was full of folks. And though cat-napping's the rule it's not always



"Spent half her time roosting on Albert."



"The youngsters only do easy foot work at the start."



"Old John always has been a nursemaid to the babies."

the case. Take Dutch and George Denman. I forget what town it was but there'd been quite a storm and the boss he'd been up all night working Dutch on mired wagons. When daylight showed it sure would have been a toss-up to tell which was the most all in—Dutch or the boss man. Anyhow, George lays right down on some straw with Dutch sprawled out and George's head on the old boy's trunk. George he sleeps for four hours straight during which time I passed in and out a half dozen times and never sees so much as a wiggle from Dutch. Looked as if the bull was dead to the world for the whole four hours."

As Dave talked many of the elephants besides Mabel had lowered themselves to the floor of the menagerie tent. Some lay still as though dozing or making ready for sleep. Others weaved their trunks over the ground, occasionally bringing wisps of hay to their mouths or tossing them upon their recumbent sides. Some threw dirt.

"They's been making this spot their beds for four nights now," Dave said as he led the way in and around the line, "and so a lot of 'em have heaped up dirt pillows for themselves. Most of 'em likes to have their heads higher than their bodies. Like Sammy has fixed it. But Hazel here always wants her head lower down, so she rakes out the dirt and then plants the bumpy part of her dome

in the hole. Sure! Just like folks, some wanting a pillow and some preferring to pound the ear flat with the mattress."

Advancing through the half-light they had come to a big elephant that stretched on its side was reaching out with its trunk and pulling loose dirt into a little mound.

"Will it be a pillow?" John wanted to know.

"Naw! Wait a second until she gets it just right. There! See her toss it? Never saw Lizzie do that laying down before. But take it when she's standing in the line of an afternoon and specially if the ground's sandy. You'll see her reach around, scrape some sand together and pat it into a little heap. Then she'll pick it up, shut her eyes and throw it into her own face. I've watched her do that over and over again for an hour at a time."

"But why?"

"Well," Dave drawled, "if you're signed up on that idea of us kicking the bucket and then coming back to earth again as animals you might say that Lizzie was a golf nut in some other life and so's still got a hazy recollection of how she teed up the ball. Myself, I'm guessing it's a sort of a game she plays with herself. May be a dippy one for an old gal nearing forty, but there's as much sense to it as setting around whittling a stick."

"Do the others play at games? I mean besides in the rings?"

"Well, even when she was a two-year-old Rosie would fool with a bale of hay long as you'd let her—butt and roll it back and forth. She'd start it going and then hike around the end like as if to heave it back before it stopped moving. Bessie gets all kinds of fun playing with a wad of paper. Like at the cars, you'll see one of the boys wad up a part of a paper he's been reading and hand it to Bessie as we're starting for the lot. Once she's on the march she'll toss the paper ball onto her back and when it rolls off she'll kick it ahead of her with a hind foot. Hardly ever misses and'll keep the same wad going for two or three blocks. Sure!

"You know it's things like that," Dave said, "that once in a while gives trainers a hunch for a trick. Like having the bulls kick footballs. Ever see the ring herds playing London Bridge? That stunt started with somebody catching a bull crawling under another one to scratch his back. Sure! I've seen that Old John elephant go to his knees and drag himself under Queen. And head and side scratching is a game that goes on every day. Hear two of the big ones at it and you'd guess that a couple of tons of sandpaper has come to life and started to frolic. Which ain't surprising when you take a good squint at an old bull's rump. The boss

has a close up shot of Old John's skin and to look at it you'd think you was gazing at the Dakota badlands instead of eyeing an elephant's hide.

"Talking about getting hunches you ought to buzz the boss on how he worked with Sammy one winter up at Baraboo. Sammy's a big boy now but then he was only around five or six and smarter than liniment. He was chained at the near end of the line that winter so's he was in plain view when you'd enter the bull barn. Well, one morning George opened the door and what he saw made him think he was dreaming. The thing only lasted for maybe twenty seconds but there wasn't no doubt about what was going on. That Sammy punk was standing on just one leg! Now a stand with one foot off the ground is as common as crows in Oklahoma, and a pose with two legs off ain't no great explosion. But a single hind foot stand! Boy! Nobody ever heard of such a thing. But suppose George could ever get him to do it again? Nixy nix. Worked with him for two months but it wasn't no use. That early morning rehearsal all by his lonesome was Sammy's only appearance as a one-footer."

By now only Joyce, Queen, the giant Albert and two or three others at the end of the line remained standing.

"Queen's the oldest, isn't she?" John asked, recalling what George Denman had once told him.

"Yep, Queen still holds the title. Close to sixty-five now and as wonderful an old gal as ever. Peculiar though. Did George tell you about looking her in the eye? Then don't ever try it. I ain't saying you can't give her the once over. What I mean is, don't ever stand and stare at her. Do that and she'll take a slap at you with her trunk. Sure! Nope, no reason that I know of except that she just gets good and sore."

"Can elephants see very far?"

"Search me," Dave said; "never see no experiments made. But there's no getting around it that they can smell a storm coming long before us boys are hep to it. Catch 'em weaving and looking up at the eaves opening and you can bet there's wind or rain being brewed somewhere or other. All of 'em's mighty quick to get anything that's different from what they's used to. That's why they's got to be broke to emergencies in advance.

"Like take it in winter quarters where they's studying to be actors. Besides going to class and learning what you see 'em do in the show they's got to be wised along lines that you towners don't know nothing about. Sure! Otherwise they'd get scared when something happens unexpected. 'Specially going between the cars and the lot.

"Take it the last winter we was at Bridgeport," Dave explained. "Besides us and the bulls in the

elephant barn there was a flock of chickens, a goat, a couple of dogs, a pig and some rabbits and ducks—all regular boarders and sleepers. They gets the herd used to meeting up with things like that on the road. Like we're coming along a back street. Lots of times we catch up with chickens that act just as crazy in front of elephants as in front of a flivver. But they don't bother the bulls 'cause they's got used to 'em running between their legs in quarters. We used to have a biddy that spent half her time roosting on Albert. And the whole gang would prowl in and around legs and trunks scratching grain from out of the hay. Lots of times I see the ducks swimming in the water trough when the bulls was drinking out of it. Sure! Gets 'em used to the towner ducks. You could send a pig down through 'em this minute without drawing more'n a few snorts.

"Then besides the live props there's the tin cans. The boss always has a lot of 'em in a box that's nailed up against the rafters. It's got a trap door in the bottom that's worked with a string. Then when the bulls ain't expecting anything the trap's sprung and the cans come banging down on their backs. Only after a little you couldn't hardly say it wasn't expected. The old varmints learn pretty fast and the second the string moves you'll see 'em glue their

eyes on the box. Just the same the trick gets 'em used to funny noises."

Dave laughed.

"Remember how Hattie and Romey bring up the rear on the march to the lot and back? Well that Hattie sure is the world's prize pick-up elephant. Same as most of the herd she wears a hobble chain—that's the one that runs down to the front foot. But it ain't often used and so's mostly hooked up into the chain that goes 'round the neck. Now once in a while a hobble chain will slip down and start dragging; in which case it's nothing for a bull to carry the loose end to the cars in his trunk instead of letting it trail. But not Hattie. Hattie's too blame fond of collecting junk to stop at that. So if her hobble chain starts to drag she picks it up and puts the end of it in her mouth so she'll still have her trunk free for poking around.

"And there's never any telling what Hattie'll do with that old meddling trunk of hers. Pick up most anything from rocks to paper cartons. She'll carry one thing until she sees another that she'd rather have instead. Now and then when there's a fire in a town she'll gather a bouquet. Sure! You see if an alarm sounds when we're on the march, George always swings the herd close as he can to the right hand curb. And while we're waiting to

see which way the engines are coming and if there happen to be posies growing along the sidewalk, Hattie always helps herself.

"And don't tell me she don't have no eye for values. Take it when we was on our way to the cars one night and one of the boys riding an up-front elephant discovers he's dropped his bull hook. Half kidding somebody says, 'Better go ask Hattie; maybe she's got it.' And Hattie had! Sure! Must of seen the steel end shining on the ground.

"Or take it another night when we was shuffling along a back alley. Blacker than a driver's hat and with nothing lighted except the white lantern on Old John's head and the red one that's always carried at the rear on Romey. All peace and quiet until of a sudden from somewheres there started the dangedest whanging and banging you'd want to hear. 'Clang! Bang! Wham!' Not knowing what was up George yells for a wheel from where he was riding on his mustang—meaning to swing the bulls so's they'd face the curb. In case of trouble they's always better handled that way. You can see where all of them are.

"Wheels we do, with George doing a Paul Revere and the racket growing every second. And what do you suppose it was? Hattie had joined out an empty ash can! There she stood, whaling it on the pavement like as though it was a tambourine.

"Nope, there wasn't no trouble—illustrating what I've been telling you about getting the herd used to tin can music. Hattie? Oh, she didn't seem to think nothing of it. George said she just looked at him when he turned his flash lamp on her like as if she was saying, 'Who, me? Why all I was doing was collecting a souvenir.'"

Once more "prowling the line," as Dave termed it, they came to Albert, still erect and almost motionless. Except for an occasional twisting of his trunk he might have been mistaken in the dusky light for some splendid bronze statue.

"Didn't Albert mind the hen being on him?" John asked.

"Never seemed to, and if he had you can bet he'd have knocked her off. But then long before Henrietta got to be a hen she'd taken a shine to Albert. You see all the prop animals around the barn was friendly enough among themselves though there was no getting away from it that Barney the goat was the real boss. Every once in a while he'd chase the chickens and when he did, Henrietta would always beat it straight for Albert. Barney never followed but once. When he woke up he was halfway across the barn. Naw, didn't hurt him. Albert just tapped him with a half swing. After that Henrietta did most of her foraging around the big boy's feet.

"Our dog Cal and Albert was always good

friends, too. But that wasn't surprising because a Dalmatian named Frisco and him used to be as close as a sister act. That was with the Barnum show before the combine, when Frisco he'd sit on Albert's head while the bull did a hind leg stand. Lots of folks would remember that, I guess. But the best trick that the two had wasn't on the program but used to come off right here in the cat house. You see Frisco being in the bull act never traveled in the regular dog wagon but always with us. Take it on a night like this and you'd find Frisco right there in the hay alongside of Albert. Besides that he'd steal for him.

"You know how before the folks come in the candy stands at both ends of the menagerie are always heaped with peanuts? Well Frisco would watch his chance, knock a sack of goobers from a stand and carry it to Albert. The butchers was always trying to collect peanut money from the elephant department. They claimed that by the end of the season Frisco had swiped more'n a hundred sacks, and I guess he had. 'Course I'm not saying that maybe he wasn't put up to that racket at the start. Just the same he figured out another idea and without a single soul helping him either. We got the first tip on that when one day the boss passes Albert just in time to see bread crumbs squishing out the sides of his mouth. Right away he wants to

know who's been feeding bread. Nobody knew. Next day Albert had more bread and without anybody pleading guilty. Then a watch was set and what'll you be saying we discovered? That Frisco dog had been going in back of the bear cages and sneaking loaves that belonged to the bruins!"

"He surely must have been a smart dog," John said.

"He sure was. But hold on! From the way Joyce is acting I'd bet a bull hook he's up to his usual tricks. Come on back here out of sight."

CHAPTER XV

THE STRANGE WAYS OF ELEPHANTS

DAVE had motioned toward a bale of hay that partly protruded from behind the end of a cage. They seated themselves on this to wait. What John thought of as a jungle stillness now pervaded the entire menagerie. From a den which he could not locate there came what he took to be the half-muttered roar of a lion. Now and then a zebra that still remained standing thumped its hoofs in soft thuds against the ground. Halter chains clinked—as though a great distance away. Above these sounds rose a soft, reedlike note. He wondered what it was. But Dave was speaking again, this time in a whisper.

“Now keep your peepers on Joyce,” he cautioned. “Get that hump that’s rounding up just this side of him? That’s Mabel.”

“Asleep, isn’t she?” John whispered back.

“Looks like it. But keep your eyes on Joyce.”

They watched and waited. Now a camel grunted as it turned. You could hear the regular breathing of the bull men stretched like troops along the

track. And still the reedlike note wafted from somewhere out of the gloom.

"See him!" Dave warned. "Sliding over to where she's laying——"

John saw that Joyce had lifted one foot. Then he sluffed at an angle. Just what happened next he could not make out; but Mabel's head came up from the ground like the return of a huge rubber ball. At the same time she uttered a piercing squeal and sat upright. With her cry there mingled a loud "chirrup" from Albert and, simultaneously, the heads of a dozen bulls left the floor of the tent to the accompaniment of muted trumpetings and what John could only describe as dust spreading snorts.

Amid the flurry of this sudden disturbance he saw Mabel scrambling to her feet and at the same instant heard Dave fire the one word,

"Joyce!"

Yet even before the command the youngster had hastened back to his place. Now he stood as still as an iron dog on a door step.

"But what was it?" John asked as he followed Dave to the line.

"Little devil stepped on her foot. He'll do it every time he gets the chance. Just a hog and wants all the room in creation. So what does he do? Why, just what you saw him doing. Stays up until he

thinks none of us have an eye on him, then gumshoes over, eases the bottom of one of his feet onto the edge of one of Mabel's and throws his weight on it. No wonder she yowled. 'Course when she lays down again she'll crowd as far away as her leg chain will let her and so leave Joyce three-fourths of the bed and maybe some of her hay."

"Just like a kid teasing his sister," John grinned.

"Sure! And getting the whole family boiled up in the bargain."

By now the rest of the herd had once more settled down and at a reprimanding thwack from Dave, Joyce likewise took his place on the ground.

"This time I guess they're down for the night," John said.

"Unless some of the old ones start to snore or the punks get to dreaming. They do both and either one's liable to wake most of the bunch. The punks dream a lot. Sure! When we're on a run we'll sometimes be waked up by hollering coming from the car used for the youngsters. Once in a while it'll get so loud that somebody will get up to investigate. Nothing ever wrong, though, and the guess is that the racket was started by some punk having a nightmare.

"And an old bull snoring! That'll wake the dead. You'll see the peaceful snoozers come to and holler like good fellows so's to wake him up. Only don't

get it into your head that he got to snoring because he's turned on his back. I mention that owing to a lot of people asking us if elephants sleep that way. How they think a bull could balance himself on that spine ridge he wears, I dunno.

"Checking off the snorers, Old John's one. So's Pom. That Pom sure is a laugh, asleep or awake. He's one of the working elephants and does all his shoving with his mouth and ears. I mean he's all the time opening and closing his chops when he works and at the same time keeping his ears flapping like a couple of busted rudders in a gale. If you're using him to place cages, look out for your hat. For if you don't keep on the duck, zowie! One ear swipe from Pom and it will be halfway down the tent. Then he's always clowning. Why, only last week in South Bend there come a lull between cage placing and bust me if he didn't back up to the candy stand and sit on a cake of ice. Sure!

"There, again, you get what I was telling you about ideas starting from something that's just plain natural. Pom's a clown without knowing it. Or take a bull that was in the original Barnum herd. There was an elephant that while as far as you could see wasn't blessed with a lick of sense, was as gentle as a giraffe and made a fine showing in the line. Fact is she was so gentle she was timid. Never could stand being left alone when the rest of

the gang went into the big top. So finally, more to humor her than anything else, they put her into a clown suit and took her along in. She never did nothing except set on the ring bank. Only every time the performing herd got on the side of the ring farthest from her she'd seem to think they was going to leave and so would slide off the curb and start to follow. Her being dressed funny why the crowd thought she was butting in same as a sure enough clown would. That pulled a lot of laughs and so turned her into one of the hits of the act."

"Just the same most elephants have good brains, haven't they?" John asked.

"Sure! Probably eight out of every ten bulls can be shaped into pretty fair performers. Then there are those that are extra smart, right from the start. Co-co learned a lot of tricks just from seeing the others being broke. And most any of 'em will walk on their hind legs after four or five days hoisting. Sure! You see at the winter-quarters' barn there's a big beam that's bolted at both ends, trussed to the roof and set so's it runs across and above the practice ring. Hooked to the beam is a triple block and falls with the rope running through the pulley blocks and both ends of the rope coming to the ground. Now one end is for hooking into a wide leather belt but the other end's left free for pulling. Get me?"

John nodded.

"Like for hoisting hay," he said.

"Pretty much, only with a lot stronger tackle. For instead of hay it's an elephant that's got to be hoisted. And not a punk, either—might hurt their backs to start them off with leg stands or walks. The youngsters only do simple foot work at the start. What I mean is a bull that's getting into the big league class.

"All right. Now to get to the belt, it's strapped around the bull just under the front legs, brought across his back and buckled in place. Then one end of the rope is hooked into the belt, a lot of us get hold of the other end and hoist until the bull's pulled upright but with his hind feet still on the ground. Once he's in position he's pushed across the ring and then pushed back again. After a while the rope's slackened so's to put him on his own, but pulled tight if he starts to slump down. And following a few days of work like that he'll be walking like a daisy. The next thing he learns is to come down to the ground with his front feet on hearing the word,

" 'Ho!'

"By us repeating that over and over again he gets to hooking up the yell with what he's expected to do. Bulls get anything like that mighty quick and

once it's sunk into their noodles you just can't pry it out."

"But you wouldn't want to, would you?"

"Sometimes, yes," Dave asserted. "I mean sounds that they get hold of without nobody telling 'em. Now you've seen the five herds line up for the tableau along the hippodrome track just after they's bowed themselves out of the rings? Remember how they come to a hind leg stand with a herd leader standing on the heads of every fifth bull?"

John had seen them that same afternoon.

"All right. Then you know how the herd leaders hold the pose for a second and then holler 'Ho!' at which they and the bulls come down to the ground," Dave went on. "But what maybe you didn't notice is that the second the pose is over Fred Bradna blows his whistle for the clip in of the next number on the program. Now the bulls for a long time having associated Bradna's whistle and the herd leader's 'Ho's!' why the whistle and the 'Ho's!' has got to mean the same thing to 'em. Of course what Bradna aims to do is to hold off with the whistle until he hears the 'Ho's!' But maybe if the program's running slow and he's anxious to speed it up he'll rip in with the whistle before the herd leaders are set. In which case down tumble those old rubber mules and if the boys who's on their heads ain't quite balanced they's in for a

buster. For you don't have no rosin on your feet and hob nailed shoes ain't allowed.

"Now maybe you'll want to argue that that's a case of place and time instead of being anything like the bulls having learned two cues. But I got something else to tell you about what that Bessie elephant has done. Bessie's in George's herd in the middle ring. Likely you'll remember how she climbs three tubs high and then does a hind leg stand on the top tub with George standing between her ears? All right. Now all George wants is just time to get Bessie up, with himself perched on her head. The second the pose is struck he tips the salute to the grand stand, calls 'Ho!' and slides for the tub. But three different times that I know of that three-tub-high trick was never finished and George pretty close to spilled on account of some lot boss whirring a whistle for men clean outside the big top. Proving absolutely that Bessie took the whistle for a come down cue."

"Is Bessie still the slowest drinker?" John asked.

"Worse than ever," Dave growled. "You just can't hurry her up and that's all there is about it. But she's got a lot of good points. You ought to see her handle Modock on a high bridge. He's a lot older than Bessie but don't like height a little bit. There's a lot of bulls that can't stand the lofty stuff—in a ring or out of it. Besides Modock, there's

Clara and Pinto. Always bothers them to cross anything with too much air under it. Take it in a season's trouping and we'll go over a wad of bridges on our way to and from the lot and them high-shiers would crowd plumb to the center if you'd let 'em. But of course traffic rules has got to be considered so Bessie takes Modock in hand, Clara handles Katie, and so on. By either hauling or shoving they keep the timid ones in line. Sure! Every time.

"Then any herd of bulls has got to have its bridge testers. Naw, I don't mean for wagons. No twenty-four-hour man is going to send teams over anything that won't hold. I mean testers that show the rest of the elephants that everything's jake for a cross over. Old John's no slouch at that job but it's Babe that's the champeen. Only when I say bridges I don't mean the steel girder kind. I'm talking about the shaky looking ones that we'll run into on the edge of a small burg—planked floor with plenty of slivers and maybe no railings. Coming to a proposition like that, Babe will be brought to the front of the herd and led up to the edge. She'll always sniff a little as though blowing the dust off the planking. Then she'll put a foot on the first one, throw her weight forward and then pull back. Next she'll take two steps ahead and do the same thing over again. If there's a loose board you'll see her tap it with the end of her trunk. Finally, getting all

four feet on the bridge she'll proceed in pretty much the same fashion all the way across. And seeing that nothing's happened to her the rest will follow. Now in case of a bridge of that kind you'd never get the bunch across in no other way. They'd wheel and beat it first. And sometimes the youngsters won't move even after they's been showed that everything is fair and firm."

"What do you do then?"

"Call on your namesake. 'Course you'll remember Old John always has been a nursemaid to the babies. He likes to have them around and is as patient with 'em as an old hen with a lot of chicks. But when it comes to a little cuss holding up the whole works after Babe's proved everything O. K. why John he never seems to be of no mind to argue. Down goes that big head of his under the rump of the squealing punk and when it does believe me the punk ambles. Bracing himself stiff legged don't help none. John skates him across the bridge like a polar bear pushing a baby buggy. Sure! Then with a snort back he comes for the next baby, lamming him in the rear like as though he was saying, 'You little brat! I'll learn you to march correct!'"

Dave chuckled.

"Funnier than any act you ever saw. I've seen the boss setting on his horse and laughing till he cried watching John shunting the punks. And if

there happens to be three or four fractious ones the last ain't likely to need no help. He'll hold out till the last second and then seeing Old John almost on him he'll light out for the opposite shore, going as fast as his legs will carry him and bellering as though the devil was at his tail.

"But though it's funny, there's a serious side, too," Dave asserted. "For don't you forget it a stubborn punk elephant has got to be brought to time right from the start. Give him too many inches and he'll pretty soon be miles ahead of you. Every once in a while you'll meet up with one that's got to have a shock handed him before he settles down to be a good and dutiful bull. Like the thing what happened to the one with the Gentry show."

"What was that?" John asked.

"It's a yarn that I've got to deal you second hand, me not having been present," Dave related as he and John returned to the hay bale, "but Wink Weaver who used to be with the Gentrys and later on come over here to break monks and dogs spun the come-off this-wise: Seems that the punk was one of a troupe of youngsters doing an act and had the name of being the smartest one in the outfit. The trouble was he was too smart; Wink said it wasn't nothing for him to decide right in the middle of the act that school was over, on which he would tear for the back door and into the back yard. Likewise

when he started to go nothing could hold him. He just went. Never did no more harm than tear a hole in some side wall or send a few props flying; and never traveled far. Looked as though he just wanted to see what the weather was like outside. So it got to be a fairly regular thing to be on the ear-out for a holler of, 'Here comes Sonny!'

"At which the performers would step aside and let Sonny ramble."

"Whillikers! I'd have thought they'd have got hurt," John exclaimed.

"Had he been on a rampage, yes," Dave agreed; "that might have happened. But as he was just picnicking why it wasn't no difference from being in our back yard here when the wild west ponies tear out or the trained bears lope past. You just bow off to right or left and give 'em a clear track. But howsoever that was, as the feller says, Sonny sure was a truant and you never knowed when he was going to depart from the class—until he introduced himself to the flat car full of coal.

"As you maybe know, the Gentry show was of the dog and pony kind and so could get up on pretty small lots. Now one day down south they'd camped on what we call a railroad lot—close in to the freight yards. It was a tight layout and so's to squeeze out every inch of room the dressing tent was shoved square up against a string of flats that

was standing on a siding. In fact the rear wall was hung against one of the cars like as though that side wall you see just back of Albert had a flat car on the other side only us not being able to see it on account of the canvas.

"Anyhow, to get back to that Sonny boy, he was 'specially frisky that afternoon and, true to form, away he went along about the middle of the bull number, through the back door and taking on speed at every stride.

" 'Heads up!' somebody yells, 'and look out there at the dressing room door!'

"For it was for there he was headed. Not only headed for it but into it, bound as he prob'ly thought for the green fields beyond. Side wall ahead, of course, but such had never in his past meant anything to Sonny.

"Then he struck. When he did he must 'a' thought he'd hit the Wrigley building. For there wasn't more'n an inch of space between that innocent-looking canvas and the steel car behind it. He hit so square and so hard that he bounced back a good five feet and went down all in a heap.

"When they led him out Wink said his eyes looked exactly like a bozo in the movies that's got belted over the head with a ton of bricks. What later buzzed around in that think box of his I dunno, but what you can'scribble down in that note-

book of yours is that Sonny never run away no more."

"I should say I will," John whistled. "I'll remember that one all right. Did any of the babies here ever skedaddle?"

"Can't say as they have. The idea over here has always been to get rid of the frolickers. So if that sort of a punk develops or if he gets too sassy after he's growed up, he's traded off or maybe sold to a zoo where an iron fence keeps him out of mischief. Even the best heads can get fussy and run—just the same as horses. But the chances are a whole lot less if they's trained correct from the start and then kept routined. Take it when we go back to quarters they'll be lined up exactly as they are here and keep right on doing their daily dozen. Only one ring in quarters but they trots into it same as you see 'em with the show. After they's through they make the bow just as though there's an audience present and then hike trunk to tail back to their places."

"You always call 'Tail' for that, don't you?"

"Sure! And next time you see 'em going into the big top just watch how they do the grabbing. Some make a right twist and some grab left when taking hold. I ain't never studied the thing but like as not sometime somebody will and then be telling the world which is right handed and which is left handed bulls. But about the routine stuff, why one

of the chores before leaving quarters is to load and unload the bulls in the cars. That's done three or four times so's to get 'em used to it 'fore starting to troupe. And they's always carred together the same through the season. Here in the line the performing herds stands together in fives same as you see 'em in the rings. Routine all the way through."

"Do the elephant men sleep near the bulls?" John asked. "I mean on the train?"

"Some of us in a sleeper hooked on next to their cars and some of us in berths partitioned off one end of the cars they's in. And if you ever work on elephants and kip next to 'em don't forget to close your door," Dave advised. "'Cause if you don't you're liable to find yourself in the same jam as Mickey Mann."

"What happened to him?"

"Not a blamed thing," Dave grinned, "though you couldn't say as much for his pants. That was a long time back with Mickey gone to sleep in the arms of Orpheum in a partitioned off place right next to where Baby Boo was chained. Somehow the door swung open and around the edge of it swung Mickey's wear-about. Or, at any rate, one leg of 'em. That was ducks for a punk elephant and by daylight Bo had yanked off and part chewed up pretty near half the britches. You never saw

a madder man than Mickey was. He couldn't leave the car until somebody had brought him a new pair and him all the time swearing that from then on he'd sleep with his pants on."

"And did he?"

"Not even once. 'How about that swear of yours?' the boys asked that night seeing that Mickey was undressing as per usual.

" 'Well, I tell you,' he said, like as though it was something confidential, 'after I cooled down I got an idea which was to keep my eye peeled for a one legged man. As luck was with me I runs into two in one block 'safternoon, gets 'em biddin' against each other and finally sold them pants for thirty cents more'n I paid for 'em.' "

As Dave finished the story his practiced eye caught a movement at the side wall back of Old John.

"Hi, there!" he called. "Nobody allowed in here!"

"Not even an old trouper that's down and out?" whined a voice as a figure dropped the wall and made as if to hobble toward them through the dusk. It was Ben.

"Thought you was a towner," Dave apologized. "And I'll say you've arrived just in time to save my life. John here would keep a fellow up all night. I

don't know about you two but I'm turning in. You'll find your pad ready when you are," he added to John, as he started down the track.

But after a few steps he stopped.

"You can hang your pants on any of them stakes over by the bulls," he motioned.

"Not me," John retorted. "I'm going to keep mine on."

CHAPTER XVI

HOW THE ANIMALS SLEPT

BEEN to a late movie of the talking kind," Ben said as he filled the inevitable brier, "and that got me to wondering how long it will be before we get sure-enough roaring pictures. Probably it won't be a great while until you'll see billing announcing, 'Leo, the Great Sudanese Tragedian in his latest Roaringstone'; or 'Zeke Hyena, in his biggest Laughing Hit.' That coming to pass it won't be necessary for me to dig up bamboo and a giant's cough to illustrate a gnu's voice. You'll get the whole works shot at you from the silver sheet. Haven't heard the old dude piping this evening?"

"No," John answered, "but now I know what I heard a couple of times when I was with Dave. It was the Indian antelope!"

"Likely enough," Ben nodded. "Suppose we excavate among the sleepers and see what we can find."

They started around the oval. What John had learned to call the guard rope and which when the

crowds were present always separated the cages from the menagerie track, now lay on the ground. Its absence permitted a closer approach to the dens.

"Only it's never advisable to get too near without first finding out what's on the other side of the bars," Ben said. "Walking fast won't help you, for to try to get past an open cage with speed on is too much like trying to beat an express train to a crossing. Not that you'd always get hurt—but you might. I've more than once seen a careless animal man get raked. It's surprising what a little time it takes for a cat to travel the entire length of a cage, jab a paw through a bar opening, and bury his claws in a shoulder. In fact if you must get near a cat it's much wiser to pass by slowly. Any object moving swiftly arouses a desire to spring. But we are safe enough here. This is the hotel de Monk."

They peered between the bars.

"Always look top-side when you are visiting a monkey cage after bedtime," Ben advised. "Make them out up there on the highest perches? They'll nearly always roost there and mostly pack close together."

"To keep warm?" John guessed.

"Partly that, no doubt; but largely, I figure, for protection. In the first place there's safety in numbers; not necessarily for battling purposes but because at the first sign of danger the chance of

winding it is multiplied by just as many times as there are monkeys in the bunch. And they sleep high and lofty for the same reason. Having done that in the forest they pick the top perch here in captivity. And usually, though not always, there's one chap who seems to act as a lookout. Now let's see how Buster is resting."

They moved softly over the shavings to find the lion stretched flat on his side. His legs were straight out and the fore paws turned in. His head had no pillow except the hard floor of the cage.

"Not so hard either," Ben pointed out as they backed away, "because the heavy mane forms something of a mat. Still that probably counts for little since the shortest haired dogs will often sleep in the same position. Here's Nellie. Get her pose?"

John saw that the lioness was almost squarely upon her back, legs in the air but with the paws drooping.

"Now a male will sometimes sleep in that position, but not often. Yet it seems to be a favorite way with the females. Not very graceful but I suppose it's comfortable."

"Do they dream?" John asked.

"The males give every indication of doing so. I've seen Mars' paws tremble and twitch almost to the point where you'd suppose he was going to waken. Sometimes at such moments he appears to;

or at any rate will give out a long breath and shift his head a trifle. But a minute later his paws will be going it again."

"The lionesses too?"

"I've never seen like actions in them so I can't say. But with monkeys I've watched a tail swinging back and forth like a pendulum when to all appearances the animal was sound asleep. No, I can't give you the why of it. Yet I'm guessing that certain characteristic movements made by animals when they are supposed to be sleeping count for a whole lot more than has yet been figured out. I say 'supposed to be sleeping' because it's quite likely that no wild thing ever sleeps anything like as soundly as we sleep. Most of us lie down in what we believe to be perfect safety and so soon become dead to the world. Probably an animal never does. Looking at it from that angle perhaps it isn't so very remarkable that a sleeping canary sometimes keeps his swing going, a monkey moves his tail, or that a duck when 'asleep' prevents himself from drifting inshore by paddling with one foot. For are they actually 'sleeping' when they do those things? Perhaps they and most all animals are never at any time more than what for want of a more exact phrase we might define as 'half asleep,' yet getting as much needed rest as humans get when they are 'sound asleep.'"



"Everybody knew about Jumbo and his fame is still marching on."



ELEPHANT TRUNKS

*Left: "Does it with the finger at the end of the trunk."
Right: "Some make a right twist and some grab left when taking hold."*



"Never knew two bulls that weren't altogether different once you became acquainted with their eyes and faces."

As they came to the polar-bear dens John saw that Deacon lay sprawled on one side.

"The polars sleep in most any old position," Ben said, "and so do the hyenas. The hip usually takes to the tank but keeps her nose out of water by resting it against the wall or edge. The seals snooze on their sides, stomach, or back—exactly like humans. But if one dozes deep in the tank he is likely to keep his ears under water. That is because water, being a fine conductor of sound, is bound to carry warnings. Of course nothing ever happens here but inborn instincts are naturally still strong."

"Do animals ever walk in their sleep?" John asked.

Ben shook his head.

"Not to my knowledge, and I'm leaning toward the belief that they don't. On the other side of the picture there's a tradition in elephant circles that the now-departed Jennie was once guilty of such a caper. Maybe it's a low-down trick to spin so uncertain a yarn about a bull that's no longer present to defend her reputation, and I'll repeat it only with the distinct understanding that the tale has its doubtful points.

"It was back in the spring of 1910. Pearl Souder was training in those days and he'd perfected a herd in the art of what he called chamber music. One elephant made as if to saw a double-bass, another

walloped a drum, a third whanged a tambo, and so on. Jennie played the hand organ. It soon developed that nothing pleased her more than to take the handle in her trunk and send it twirling. There must have been something in the wailing strains that tickled her ears. So Pearl, who always claimed to be strong for the reincarnation theory, immediately asserted that when Jennie next came back to earth she'd be an Italian organ grinder.

" 'Always wondered why she pulls up whenever we pass the monks,' he'd say. 'She's starting in to pick out somebody to hand out the tin cup.'

"That, however," Ben continued, "was only Pearl's little joke. Besides I'm getting away from the main plot. The Ringling show had come down from Baraboo for the spring opening at the Coliseum—the same that's still over there on Wabash Avenue—and everything was going full tilt, including Jennie's hand organ. Once in the ring she almost got the reputation of being a clown, for long before it was time to put on the musical skit she'd be reaching over the curb and trying to get hold of the handle. Or once that bull band started she didn't pay the slightest attention to the baton. She'd keep right on cranking a whole ten beats after the piece was supposed to have hit the final bar. Jennie surely loved that toy. There's no question about that part of the story. Elephants are like

that: they take a fancy to certain things and when they do they are crazy about them.

"But come to the approach of dawn one morning, as they say in the books, and all was as peaceful in the Coliseum Annex as it is here at this minute. For it was in the Annex that the menagerie was placed. Connecting with it was the main part of the building with the three rings lined down the middle. Everything and everybody sleeping quietly when of a sudden Pearl was awakened by music. He raised himself to listen. The strains were wafted in from the arena, and it was the hand organ.

" 'Only some of the boys serenading the hippo,' he yawned, and lay down again.

"But the organ continued to peal forth ancient tunes until Pearl finally rose in a rage and groped his way through the gloom toward the spot from where the music was coming.

" 'Pretty time of night for a concert,' he grumbled. 'I'll report these rowdies in the morning—see if I don't!'

"For fear they might slip away Pearl crept up in the darkness and then struck a match. And there stood Jennie!

" 'There was just time enough between my surprise and the few seconds the match lasted to note a peculiar look in her eyes,' Pearl afterward related. 'They was as glassy as a couple of marbles and so

help me I had to kick her in the ribs three times before she even knew I was present. I struck another match just as she gives herself a shake and drops the organ handle, after which she lets me lead her back to the line.'

" 'But maybe wasn't it the flame from the match that made her eyes look funny there in the dark?' ventured one of the boys when Pearl was telling the experience.

" 'Nary a bit of it,' Pearl declared. 'No, sir, gents all, besides being a great virtuoso that Jennie is likewise a somnambulist.'

" 'Just the same,' Ben concluded, 'Jennie was never again known to do anything that so much as resembled sleepwalking and I've on a couple of occasions thought I caught Pearl tipping the wink when he was retelling the yarn.'

" 'Anyhow, it's a peach of a story,' John decided.

" 'Not so bad,' Ben agreed, 'though remembering that you're here to excavate for facts and not for fables I'd advise you to go easy when repeating it.'

" 'You say Jennie is dead now?'

" 'Died with her troupings boots on in Columbus, Ohio, in the spring of '18. Yet not without having attained more fame than is usual among her kind. For take it by and large there aren't many of the

hundreds of show elephants that have trekked through the past half century that have had much individual billing. Jumbo, of course. Everybody knew about Jumbo, and his fame is still marching on. Old John is fairly well known to the present public. Then there was Big Bingo—you probably saw Bingo?”

“Once when the show came to our town,” John said, “standing all by himself on a platform. Didn’t he wear a kind of robe—all plush and gold braid?”

“She did,” Ben answered, “for that same Big Bingo was none other than Jennie. Now most elephants stop growing when they’re thirty or younger and it is probable that Jennie was no exception to the rule. But just the same as she touched the sixties she seemed to get taller. Long a giant it’s likely that as she began to hollow in a bit at the eyes and grow bonier along the spine you got the impression that she was moving skyward. Anyhow, a feature being needed for the menagerie and Jennie rating as big a bull as there was in foot chains, she was elected. But any showman will tell you that nothing like, say, ‘Jennie, the largest Elephant in Captivity,’ would look right on a stand of paper. But make it read, ‘Big Bingo, the Biggest Brute that Breathes,’ and you’ve got a line with punch in it.

“So it was that fate turned a corner for Jennie,

she was rechristened Bingo, twelve-sheeted for fair and exhibited through the seasons of 1916 and '17. A corking feature she was, too, with her new name having as much to do with it as Jennie herself. There was something about 'Big Bingo' that got under the skin. Many a time when we had just rolled into a stand and a wagon would be mired you'd hear the kids yelling,

"'Bring out Big Bingo! Where's Bingo? He'll move it for you!'

"As for Jennie—well, I guess you've long ago noticed that I like to speculate on what animals think about. And where's the harm in wondering what might have gone through the old dame's head when she got that promotion? Here for more than twenty years or since joining the Ringling show in '96 she'd merely been one of the common herd—eating hay and peanuts in the line, or moving trunk to tail, in and out of the big top. Then all of a spring she's sent to the wardrobe department, robed up like a Chinese dragon, and put on a throne!

"Yet taking the other twist and getting down to known facts, George Denman will tell you that Jennie never liked her new job. For though she wasn't separated from the rest of the gang by much more than the width of the menagerie track, she'd nevertheless grow lonesome. One afternoon when her Arabian Night attendant got off watch for a

couple of minutes she started right in to abdicate—left the platform and shoved back into her old place with the democrats—robes, crown, and all.

"No, Jennie didn't want to be king, or queen, or whichever you're a mind to call her. And it was this growing impatience on her part that finally decided her return to the line. Yet during the two years of her reign she acquired, as I've said, such fame as comes to but few elephants. And in the nick of time. For come that May night in the following year she pulled back for a few seconds as the herd was crossing the viaduct at Columbus on the way to the cars. Then she plunged forward on her face and when the boys examined her it was found that the fall had broken her neck.

"So ended the career of the bull that elephant men always speak of as Jennie but which if you ever tell her story, wouldn't be known to a dozen outsiders unless you used her throne moniker of Big Bingo."

"What made her stumble?"

"Probably something inside that had been going on for nobody knows how long. She had been ailing a little the previous winter and showing signs of old age. Still she seemed perky enough when we started to troupe. It might have been heart failure, as that hits certain animals just as it does people."

"Dave says a lot of elephants won't lie down when they get sick," John remarked.

"Or often enough don't even give any sign that they're specially under the weather. Which we might guess is why it came about that figuratively speaking Jennie died with her boots on.

"And talking of footgear," Ben yawned, "there's nothing whatsoever figurative about mine coming off right pronto. See you in the morning? Fair enough. Good-night and watch out you don't do any sleepwalking."

Ben passed out under the side wall while John, finding an upturned bucket near the tarpaulined bed, began to remove his shoes.

Yet once stretched on his "elephant's breakfast" he did not go to sleep. Instead he lay staring at the dimly seen canvas ceiling listening to the sounds that came intermittently from the various parts of the menagerie. At times there were no sounds at all except the breathing of Dave and the men who slept to the right and left of him.

Then muted noises, as of a lion groaning in his sleep; or perhaps a groan half yawned and half swallowed, followed by a deep, breathy sigh. That last, he thought, might have been Whitey.

A low growl, then silence again.

Now out of the stillness there came a half dozen

nasal barks, beginning in a high key but quickly diminishing into mere nips of tone. A sea lion of course. Silence once more only to be broken by a soft scraping like a mouse gnawing. Probably some animal at a bone.

A zebra stamped. There followed the metallic clinking of a halter chain and a smothered snort.

Once John heard chatterings and a muffled shriek that he was certain must have come from the monkey cage. Perhaps a quarrel. He raised himself on one elbow, but except for an occasional whimpering the disturbance soon ceased.

He looked at the elephant line. Albert was still standing and far to the right three others had got to their feet. He guessed that the last two were Hattie and Romey. As he watched he saw Romey—if it was Romey—toss a mixture of straw and dirt upward toward his back. The dust floated into the rays of the nearest stand lamp to mingle with moths that were dancing around the light.

Again on his back, and to the accompaniment of the stillness or of sounds similar to those he had already heard, John recounted some of the many things that Ben or Dave had told him. Funny about Ben—nobody knowing who he was. He would give a lot to know. In the morning he'd ask him. No; wouldn't do. None of his business. Nobody's business. Two Bens? Pshaw! Of course not. It was two

rhinos: one stuffed and the other all bones. But that wasn't it either—he meant two Bens. One that you saw and talked to and one that was a mystery—excavate—dig in—in——

As Dave would have said, John Foster was in the arms of Orpheum.

CHAPTER XVII

THE SLANG OF THE CIRCUS

THE thing of which John was next conscious seemed a muddle of words and thumps—thumps at his shoulders, words roared in his ears.

He sat bolt upright to see Dave in the act of pulling on a shoe.

"Hay up!" Dave repeated. "Time to hay up, showman! Say, you didn't happen to be in the Frisco earthquake, did you?"

"If he was he never knew it," put in one of the boys from the opposite side of the canvas.

Still blinking, John slid from his blanket.

"Guess I must have been pounding the ear pretty hard," he grinned.

"You certainly was," Dave rejoined. "I come near wearing out a shoe hoofing you awake and was just reaching for a bull hook when you come to."

But if John had been slow to waken he made up for it by the speed with which he got into his clothes, and was soon helping to carry the bedding

back to the rest tent. As they passed along the line he saw that all but two or three of the elephants were off the ground. Those standing weaved impatiently at their foot chains. Some uttered loud "Chirrup."

"Heard me hollering 'Hay up!' at you," Dave explained as he and John bent over the wash basins in the compound. "That's always the feed cue and hearing it they know what they's got a right to expect. There's an extra towel and comb hanging from that side pole."

"Just like saying 'Flag's up' at the cook tent," John said.

"Sure! Only we always feed the bulls before making the crumb castle ourselves. Set? All right, let's go back inside. There goes George giving the 'Hay up' now."

A dozen bales of hay were dragged into the menagerie, the wires cut, and the flakes shaken apart under the waiting trunks.

"Who gets what you slept on?" George Denman called out to John.

"Queen, if it's all right."

"Go ahead."

So John's bed, now turned into the long-promised "elephant's breakfast," went to the dowager of the herd.

Meantime the cage men were lowering those

side boards or "doors" that had been put up the night before to shut out the light from the stand lamps; the cameleers were sifting hay flakes in front of the humps, and the zebra grooms distributing "cornflakes," as Dave called hay, to the convicts. The spotted girls were already munching from their lofty mangers.

Lions yawned sleepily and John saw that Whitey was still at the back of his den half lost in shadow.

"Nothing for the cat animals to get excited about as they won't be fed until afternoon," George Denman said. He walked up and down the elephant line, here and there kicking piles of hay nearer to the babies. Then he turned and John heard him call. "Joe Blow!"

But instead of one, all of the elephant men came up and as they did the boss stripped breakfast checks from a pad which he had taken from his pocket.

"Want to see them?" he queried when the distribution was finished. "All day and dated."

"I remember from the time when Mr. Snellen took me over to breakfast," John said. "Only we didn't use any."

"Well, guess we won't have to either. Tickets are only to keep ringers or somebody that's been discharged from getting a free meal."

"Does one of the men have to come up first when

you give out the checks?" John wanted to know as they left the menagerie.

"Don't get you."

"I mean when you called for Joe Blow, just then."

The boss laughed.

"Jiggeldy Moses, I guess you'll be getting the low-down on us as well as the bulls before you're through," he said. "That's just another way of saying 'Flag's up.' Comes from a flunkey who used to be here—name of Joe Blow. He worked for Ollie Webb and one of his jobs was to raise the flag. That got us to pairing up the two until they come to mean the same thing. Then the big fight came off, Joe he went over and never came back to the show. Been ten or twelve years since he yanked the hal-yards but all the old-timers know what it means when a boss hollers 'Joe Blow.' "

Near the cook house John caught sight of a horseman riding toward them. It was his old friend Blackie Diller of the baggage stock department. Seeing the assistant boss hostler as George Denman was explaining the meaning of Joe Blow brought to John's mind the feeling he had experienced that evening when he and Blackie had watched the first wagons starting for the runs: a realization of how little he knew about the show and how much there

was to learn. For first of all—like any towner—a fellow was likely to think of meal time on a circus lot being announced with a call of breakfast, lunch, or dinner, depending upon the time of day. But once initiated you learned of that far more picturesque equivalent, "Flag's up!" A lot of satisfaction in knowing that; took you out of the towner class and put you in the inner one. And then you dug a little deeper and bumped up against "Joe Blow!"

But just as had been the case that late afternoon when they were riding together, it was Blackie who consoled John when the subject came up a few minutes later at the bosses' table in the cook tent.

"Why, dog cinch it, so far as that goes," Blackie declared, striking the cloth with a heavy fist, "there's no end of First of May showmen right here with the outfit that hasn't got line nor trace of an idea why 'Joe Blow' means what it does. The whole business is loaded with things like that. Look at some of the hollers that go up around a wagon show—I mean a sure-shooting mud opera that wheels it from stand to stand in the red buggies. Soon as you get in sight of the town you've been trompin' around tryin' to find you'll hear the workin' men holler 'China.' And none of 'em ever agree what's it from. Some say breakfast because though they're going to feed off tinware, it means the same as crockery, which means the same thing as china-

ware. Get it, don't you? Bawling 'China' meaning that grub's close to hand. But take it on the gee side and you'll hear another old-timer arguing that the idea comes from when you was a kid—digging a hole in the ground and saying you was burrowing to China. And if you ever troupe with an all-axle-grease trick, battle all night over hub-deep things called roads and finally plough into what you've been aiming for, you'll say that the notion about you having dug your way to China ain't so far over the traces as you might think. Anyhow," Blackie concluded, "there you are. You pays your money and takes your choice."

Frank Detre, head waiter in the long end, had come up while Blackie Diller was speaking and stood listening until he had finished.

"All right, professor," Frank put in, "since you're holding class, how about 'dukie?' What's it come from?"

Blackie raised his hands overhead.

"Out of my department," he protested.

"Yet like as not you've tipped the derivation in just what you did then," observed Happy Jack Snellen, who had just sat down.

"Derivation!" repeated Frank Detre. "There's a word. Now we've got a sure-enough professor with us."

"Stow the chatter and fetch the vittles," Happy



The mothers sat stolidly on the perches, some nursing their babies.



"A mama's boy and is never allowed to play with the other punks."

shot back. He looked across at John. "What's up now—going to rewrite the dictionary?"

"Well, I'll take any new words I can get, Mr. Snellen."

"Then you'd better scribble 'dukies' on your cuff. Suppose we were going to make a Sunday run long enough so's the show wasn't expecting to get to the next stand until afternoon. That would mean missing a meal on the lot so to make up for it Ollie Webb would put up a thousand or so lunches in paste-board boxes. And ever since I can remember such lunches have been called dukies."

"Yes, but what's it come from?" Frank Detre persisted, putting the question across a half-dozen plates of smoking hot cakes.

"Why from your grabbers—paws, mud-hooks, dukes," Happy answered. "What'd you do if you were in a dark alley and somebody stuck a cannon in your face and told you to 'put up your dukes?'"

"Boss, I sure would reach for the moon," Frank declared.

"All right, then dukes being slang for hands and a lunch being a hand-out, seems to me it's plain enough why a cook-house lunch got to be called a dukie."

"Guess you've laid it out correct," Frank admitted, "only why do you suppose flippers was called dukes in the first place?"

"That don't appear in my contract," Happy Jack rejoined. "All I undertook was to wise you up as to how dukie started to troupe. Besides which, I don't know."

Neither did anyone else at table.

"But while you're at it," Happy Jack went on, speaking to John, "maybe you'll want to add that a run of the kind I was mentioning would be called a 'one-dukie run.' And if you ever hear a showman telling of a Sunday when the show made a 'two-dukie run' you'll know that he means that a couple of lunches were furnished all hands."

As Happy Jack finished a foot was hoisted over the blue plank on which John was seated and Ben took his place beside him.

"Well, how's the old night prowler this morning? Any excitement after I left?"

"Only some squeals from the monkey dens," John said, "and they didn't last long."

"Probably Mickey Himself lifted an eyebrow in his sleep and scared everybody to death. That reminds me that you haven't met Mickey yet. We'll have to get you introduced after I've had my Java. What's been doing this morning?"

John told him.

"About haying up," Ben recalled, "I'm reminded of a time when the boss played a low-down trick on the powerful forty. You see they're hayed

several times a day and before street parades had gone out of style a feed was always in order just after the return to the lot. This day the boss man faked letting all the boys go to dinner without distributing as much as a wisp. But as he still was present the bulls seemed to pay no particular attention to the boys' departure. Pretty soon George walked along until he got to Old John's end of the line. Still no gesture though he says he could feel a lot of eyes boring in at the back of his head. But the minute he turned past John and started for the side wall the herd set up a noise like election night. Patient and hopeful to the last scratch it was a squall of 'Hay up!' on their own account all the way from John to Romey. As George says, they certainly did bawl him out. Now suppose we stroll over and call on the Old Folks."

"Old Folks?"

"That's always the cat-house name for the monkeys. Remember that the hyenas are the dogs, grave-diggers, or the Zekes; the hip's the hog; the seals are the Pacific water dogs; the zebras are the convicts, and the camels, the humps; the giraffes are the spotted girls; ostriches the big turkeys; and the pumas the babies—called that because they make a cry like a squalling kid.

"No end of slang around a show shop," Ben continued as they left the cook house; "similar to the

two-dukie run I heard Happy Jack telling you about. And a lot of shortcut lingo, too. Down at the runs you'll come on an old hand breaking in a student and hear him say, 'You hook your hip in the side,' not meaning that hay grapplers are to be used on dear old Martha but that the hook at the end of the pull-over rope is to be fastened in the iron ring that sprouts from the side of her cage."

"Blackie Diller was telling me that some of the slang never is figured out."

Ben nodded.

"And Blackie's right. Suppose a storm is coming up that looks as though there might be too much wind in it. Performance two thirds over and the order comes to speed up the show so as to get the folks out of the big top as soon as may be. Around an American outfit you'll now and then hear a perfectly plain 'speed up' translated by an old-time spangleback into 'Give 'em Brown's cows,' meaning the same thing. European performers tell me that across the water 'John Orderly' means to cut down on an act or step on the gas. Now it's likely that both those sayings had a direct hook-up with either a happening or a person, or possibly both. Only so far as I'm able to tell you, the connection has long ago been lost in the shuffle."

"Like 'Joe Blow' might be fifty years from now," John guessed.

"Or 'Very much Upper Sandusky,' " Ben said. "Twenty years or so ago the Forepaugh Sells show played the town to terrible business and to this day you'll often hear a bloomer stand referred to as having been 'Very much Upper Sandusky.' "

They had passed under the menagerie side wall and come to the monkey cage. And in the "prettiest kind of time," as Ben remarked when he saw that breakfast was about to be served.

CHAPTER XVIII

A KING AND HIS SUBJECTS

ON THE ground in front of the simian hostelry squatted Roy Clark, who had charge of it. Beside him lay an assortment of apples, carrots, oranges, and bananas. The keeper was cutting these into slices or small cubes and placing the mixture in a shallow oblong pan—except that the bananas when peeled were kept in thirds.

“Looks good enough for anybody to eat,” John said.

“It is,” Roy Clark replied. “Absolutely fresh and washed as clean as in your mother’s kitchen. Order that much salad in one of those stone cook houses over on Michigan Avenue and you’d have to hold a benefit to pay your check.”

He smoothed the smaller-cut ingredients into a low mound and stuck the bananas upright like candles on a birthday cake.

But John and Ben were not the only ones to evince an interest in Roy’s concoction. At the end

of the cage to his left a dozen or more monkeys were congregated. Half their number squatted on the floor, their fore paws holding fast to the bars. Others clung to the brass rods immediately over their heads, while three or four perched on a shelf near the roof. Their ever shifting eyes were mostly centered on Roy Clark and the feeding pan. Yet not always. Frequently they turned their heads to glance upward and toward the opposite end of the cage. Following their gaze John saw what he had not at first noted—a lone monkey, half upright and half lounging on a perch, his back propped in the farthest and upper corner of the den.

"Look," he said to Ben, "there's one all by himself. Guess maybe he's not feeling very well."

Ben winked at Roy.

"Maybe, but let's wait and see."

The keeper was now removing the toe board so that the pan could be shoved into the cage. At the first movement the horde at the left crowded nearer, some chattering, others whimpering, and always casting furtive glances toward the lone monkey in the far corner. As for the latter, John saw that he had a straw in one paw and that he seemed to be chewing the end of it—very deliberately and still slued with his back against the wall. Nor did he offer to move even after the pan had been pushed to the center of the cage.

Neither did any of the band at the left advance more than a few inches. One who appeared more daring than the rest made as if to detour toward the waiting food; but after a few hesitant steps he evidently thought better of it and with what sounded to John like a scream of defiance directed toward the solitary monkey in the corner, hastily rejoined his companions.

"They're afraid of him!" he exclaimed.

"John Foster, you said it," agreed Ben. "That's Mickey Himself, and believe me, he not only rules all the roosts but every square inch of space that's under them. He takes his own sweet time, too; which I've often noticed is a boss monk's way of preserving discipline. I'm judging that he's just as hungry as any of his subjects only it's not in keeping with his policy to show it."

But now the monkey tossed the straw away and lounged forward to an upright position. His mouth opened in a protracted yawn. Then he slowly advanced along a perch to a point directly over the pan. This action brought a renewed chattering and crowding from the rest of the crew. Several scurried along the ceiling farthest from Mickey and remained at the end of the cage which he had just left. Meanwhile he had dropped to the cage floor and sat down beside the pan. Now a fore paw dug into the food and came out sticking and brimming

with the mixture. Mickey crammed a part of the take into his mouth and threw the rest over one shoulder. A wee monkey made a quick foray, caught up a bit of discarded orange and swung himself to the cage top.

"Crumbs from the king's table," laughed Ben. "Now watch the bananas."

Mickey seized one of the titbits, tore off one end, and then flung the remainder across the cage. He repeated this with a second and a third, and as the several discards went through the air screaming monkeys pounced upon them.

But now, either because the fourth banana was of better flavor than the rest or merely because he had decided that his sovereignty had been sufficiently established, Mickey tucked it under one arm, pushed a handful of salad into his mouth and with as much deliberateness as that which had marked his descent, returned to his exalted corner.

At the first intimation of this intention the rest of the monkeys advanced upon the pan, some swinging to it from overhead, others leaping from the bars to which they had been clinging, and a third group rushing along the length of the cage.

"No, he's not liable to bother them again," Roy Clark said. "He's showed he's boss and got the pick of all he wants, so they're welcome to the rest."

The first onslaught on the pan over with, the

more timid ones took their turn. The whimpering gradually subsided and within a period of what might have been three minutes as John calculated the time, all had possessed themselves of a share of the breakfast. Comparative quiet now reigned in the den. In his chosen corner overhead, Mickey surveyed his realm across the tip of a nose well smeared with banana.

"But you'll notice that none of the rest are specially near the throne," Ben pointed out. "No, sir. Your wise monkey subject soon gets onto the fact that his head is in danger if he gets too fresh with the king."

"He sure has a mean wallop," Roy Clark said. "Clouts the big ones and slaps the punks."

"Will he always be the boss?" John asked.

"He will until he gets licked. See that one over in the opposite corner? Maybe you noticed how he made a run toward the feed pan just after I slid it inside. Now he's a Bolshevik and Mickey's always having trouble keeping him in place. He'll outweigh Mickey, too, but somehow he lacks nerve. And anyhow most of them just stand for it as though it was natural to have a gaffer present and probably deciding that it might as well be Mickey as anybody else."

"Does he always keep them waiting long?"

"Not always and then some days you'll see him

keep them away from the pan for as much as five minutes. I figure it all depends on how hungry he is. Once in a while he'll come over to the pan and muss is up without appearing to eat hardly anything at all."

"What kind of monkeys are they?" John wanted to know.

"Here in this cage there's just the two—rhesus and sphinx baboons. Mickey's a rhesus. They're pretty easy to train but not so friendly as the sphinx."

Roy called to one named Jennie. She thrust out a paw and in answer to a sucking noise which the keeper made, returned a sound that seemed to be between a hen's cluck and a little pig's grunt.

"Jennie's a sphinx baboon," Roy said. "Want to see her ride the elevator?"

He clasped the bottom of a bar with his right hand so that the curled thumb and index finger formed a seat. Jennie hopped aboard, putting her fore paws around the bar as though she were about to climb it.

"What floor?" Roy demanded. "All the way to the top?"

He slid his fist upward and so raised the monkey until her head touched the cross board above.

"Express to the basement," announced the keeper and down came the hand with Jennie still aboard.

"Here," he said to John, "you give her a ride. Only first let her take your hand so she'll know you're friendly. No, don't pull away—let her pull you. That's the idea. Now maybe she'll do it."

But halfway up Jennie jumped from John's hand and returned to reach for Roy's shoulder.

"That's one of the first things to remember when handling any kind of a monk," he explained. "Never jerk back. Let them have their way for otherwise if they've got any sort of hold at all they'll come at you with a second and maybe all four. Or even give you the teeth. For instance if one of the monks got hold of your necktie and you tried to jerk away it would like enough be torn off. But if you'd give in and start to cluck ten to one he'd get interested in that and let go the banner."

"All the same the best way is to stay out of reach altogether, unless, of course, you're used to handling the Old Folks. Trouble is that once you got up close and he'd let go of the neckware he'd be liable to take a half hitch around one of your ears or your nose. Then if you got scared there'd be trouble."

"But suppose a fellow didn't get rattled?"

"Then it's odds that nothing would happen. Only odds though for there are monks that are just naturally bad actors."

"How are the mothers and babes this morning?" Ben asked.

"Finer than silk. Wait a second and we'll have a look."

The keeper unfastened the toe board, removed the feeding pan, and replaced it with another containing water. This done the three passed down the menagerie tent, out the front door and into the side show.

The cage containing the mothers and their infants was constructed of heavy wire mesh. Shelf perches bordered it near the ceiling and suspended down the center were several rope swings, all within easy reach of the perches. Scattered in various parts of the inclosure John saw fully two dozen big and little monkeys. All the grown ones seemed to be the same in size and all the babies appeared to be of about the same age. The mothers sat stolidly on the perches, some nursing their babies. But many of the little ones were moving about.

"Every bit the same as regular kids," Roy Clark said. "Watch them a while and you'll see the shy ones that are always hiding or maybe peering out at you from behind a mother's back. Then there are the extra timid ones that travel just so far away and then beat it back like as though they'd seen a spook. On the other hand there's Mutt—that little shaver farther over—who's already quite a traveler and climber. That's his ma back in the corner from him."

"Asleep?" John said.

"Not as long as we're nosing around. She may look asleep but you can bet she knows what's going on. Still she's not a worrier. Now that mother that's in the opposite corner will hardly ever let her baby out of her arms though he's stronger and a bit bigger than Mutt. Just the same he's a mamma's boy and is never allowed to play with the other punks."

As John watched, the mother began examining her baby's head. Having searched through the scanty covering she next turned her attention to its back, parting the hairs as though with a comb.

"Looking for fleas, isn't she?" he asked.

"Nope, though most folks who see monkeys doing that think so. Of course there may be fleas now and then but when you catch them at that stunt you can almost bet that what the explorer is finding is not fleas but only little particles of dried skin."

Two of the babies whose mothers evidently allowed them a reasonable amount of freedom crawled over the floor to one of the swing ropes. One rolled another on the floor.

"Small as they are they're already learning to play tricks on each other," Roy said. "You'll catch three of them in a row and see one on the end reach around the middle chap and pull the third one's tail. Of course the middle one gets blamed for it. And they like to put things on their heads.

Shove a little tin cup inside and sooner or later every one will be making a hat out of it."

The "mamma's boy" had strayed a short distance from his mother and John started to move nearer the cage. But at the first step the maternal paw caught the little one's tail and hauled him back between her knees.

"They certainly are like people," John said.

"Well, you remember the Æsop yarn, don't you?" Ben asked. "No? Why he has a monk boo-hooing his head off as he passes through a cemetery and when somebody asks him what's the grief he says, 'Oh, nothing much, except that I always weep like this when I'm reminded of my poor dead ancestors.' And they certainly have a way of grabbing your interest. But, man alive, if you think this run of Simians registers you should have been around the two Johns for a while. Eh, Roy?"

"I should say so. Especially John the First. Nearest thing to a human that I ever saw. And to see that gorilla dying—well, it was just like watching your brother, that's what it was."

"Better tell our friend here about him," Ben suggested.

"Have a heart," Roy pleaded. "I haven't been to breakfast yet. Besides you can tell all that I could and more. Go ahead, Ben. I've got to go eat before the flag's pulled on me."

"Looks as though it was up to your uncle," Ben said as Roy Clark left them. "Only let's go over to the prop wagon where I keep my trunk. I've got some pictures back there and if I've got to hand out a lecture it might as well be illustrated."

They skirted the round end of the big top to the back yard.



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*"A battle coming and John wasn't to be the first that ever lost one
at the Old Garden."*



"Take a chimp, and you'll find ear enough to make two of John's"

CHAPTER XIX

JOHN THE MARTYR

PROBABLY you know something about the gorilla called John Daniel the Second," Ben began when they had reached the wagon and seated themselves inside it, "he having been on tour throughout the season of 1924."

"I read a lot about him," John said, "but the show didn't come to our town that year. Dad and I wondered why he was called 'the Second.'"

"Because there had been a John Daniel the First. As a matter of fact there never was but one gorilla named John Daniel, that being the one the show brought to New York in the spring of '21. He died before we left the Garden. The second gorilla's real name was Sultan. But that's another story which, to avoid confusion, I'll wait and come to later on.

"To start the saga of John Daniel the First, I'm a little lame on his earliest history. He was said to have been captured in the Gaboon country and the tale has it that he was kidnapped. My private opinion is that traders looking for monkeys shot the parent gorillas and then bagged the baby. But how-

ever that may have been we know that the little chap eventually fell into the hands of the captain of a French freighter and in the course of time arrived with him at Havre. There in the French port he was seen and bought by Major Rupert Penny of the British Royal Air Force. Realizing that he had a prize, Major Penny placed the youngster in the care of an aunt, Miss Alyce Cunningham, at her home in London, England. And it is with the time when Miss Cunningham became godmother to the jungle waif that his real story begins. Which is to say when he was thought to be from six to eight months old.

"Once settled the baby began to grow fat and strong after hardships that must have well-nigh finished him. Not that Miss Cunningham knew anything about the care of a gorilla. On the contrary, she has told me that up to the time when the little one came into her charge she had rather felt a dislike for apes. But with a woman's instinct she took to the baby from the start, and he to her. He was christened John Daniel, though he always answered most readily to 'Johnnie.'

"I've said that Miss Cunningham knew nothing about the care of a gorilla. Who did? Mighty few had ever lived in captivity up to that time and none beyond a comparatively short while—perhaps a few months. Yet as it turned out she adopted the

wisest of all courses: she simply gave him the care and attention that she would have given a human baby.

"So it came about," Ben continued, "that for more than two years John lived the life of an ordinary child in that London home. He was taught the same habits that any well-brought-up youngster should be taught. He was allowed the run of the house—probably just about as you were given it when you were a three-year-old. For you've got to remember that an animal—at least to a certain point and in a limited degree—matures a whole lot faster than a human being. So that from around twelve months of age John opened and closed doors or windows, climbed stairs, and wanted to slide down banisters. Sometimes he did these things of his own accord and sometimes he did them when he was told. He would take books from a bookcase. Not in all probability with any idea as to what they were, but because they had bright-colored bindings and made good playthings. But when ordered to do so he would nearly always put them back on their shelves.

"Miss Cunningham has told me that John liked children from the very first. When permitted and if the day was warm he would go to a window that opened on the street, unlock it without assistance, raise it, and often salute passers-by by striking his

chest. Especially if children gathered to watch. Yet when told he would lower the window and lock it again."

"Would he sit at table to eat?" John asked.

"Very often. But don't be getting it into your head that he was a stunt monk like those to be seen in vaudeville or the movies. I mean I don't want you to be picturing him in clothes and a plug hat. For John was never taught tricks. He was schooled as any careful mother would instruct a growing child. He needed no clothes because his own coat was sufficient and he wanted no hat because gorillas don't wear hats in the natural state.

"But to get back to your question, John frequently sat at table and his table manners were fairly good. He would pull up his own chair and he always ate slowly. He never grabbed. As for drinking, he always preferred drinking from a glass to any other way. Among foods he liked fruit, jellies, and jams best of all and he often drank a cup of tea in the afternoon with evident relish. He ate bread but not as often as other things and milk seemed to be his main stand-by just as it is likely to be with the average youngster—animal or human.

"Still," Ben went on, "when I say that John was never taught tricks I wouldn't have you suppose that he didn't cut capers or develop natural devilment. If Miss Cunningham had visitors and any

showed the least sign of nervousness, John would detect it in an instant. Then it was ducks for him to scamper swiftly in front of or behind such a person and slap him on the knees or the back of the legs as he passed. And nothing suited him better than to pull paper from a wastebasket and toss the scraps over the floor. Yet Miss Cunningham has told me that he never refused to pick up the litter and put it back in the basket, though she always noted that he did this with what she described as a 'downright bored look.'

"Another quirk was that he liked to steal his food and knew the difference between that which he was apparently not supposed to have and that which was in plain view. So to humor him fruit was sometimes placed on a high shelf where he'd be obliged to reach for it. He always did this in a furtive sort of way."

"Would you call that reasoning?" John asked.

"Maybe. But there were happenings that came a lot nearer to an argument in favor of that theory—as, for example, when he covered Miss Cunningham's lap with a newspaper. I ought to have said that John Daniel demanded and received plenty of cuddling and affection. In fact I'd say that that was as important to his welfare as the food he ate. He liked to be held long and often; so it was a frequent habit of his to climb into Miss Cunningham's lap.

But whenever she was dressed to go out she refused him his usual place. Just how many refusals there had been I can't say. Besides it doesn't matter for the important point is that one afternoon when John had met with rebuff he hunted up a newspaper, spread it over Miss Cunningham's knees and then proceeded to climb to her lap. And that, mind you, without the least suggestion from her and being something that she had never done for him.

"But to move along with the story, such as I've in a general way outlined it was John Daniel's life up to March, 1921. Then he was sold and brought to New York.

"That must have been a hard parting," Ben continued as he refilled and lighted his pipe. "Yes, that must have been pretty tough. How much the show paid for John I don't know. I've heard figures running all the way from ten thousand to thirty-two thousand dollars. My guess is that the amount was somewhere between the two. But that is only a surmise because the big bosses never were in the habit of peddling their business and since my name's not painted on any of the wagons I'm not likely to be asking.

"Doubtless, though, it was a sum that few owners of a pet in ordinary circumstances could have refused. Still I'm mortally sure that had Miss Cun-

ningham supposed that John would be dead within less than a month after his arrival in New York she never would have consented to the separation.

"However, it's a matter of fact and history that John Daniel was taken to the United States Mail Steamship liner, the *Old North State*, placed in an improvised cage between decks and shipped west. Peering back at the situation from where you and I are sitting now, that first come off must have been a walloping blow to so sensitive an animal. For the quarters provided were more crate than cage—just a box of unpainted boards knocked together and measuring around ten by twelve feet in size. Set in one side were bars through which the captive could look out and at the ends there were gratings to admit additional air. A solid door—hasped and padlocked—opened from one end. On the floor of the crate there was straw, a box with bedding, and from the ceiling swung a rope provided for John's exercise and amusement.

"J. T. Benson had been the agent in the deal and he accompanied John on the voyage, giving him all the care that any man could have given. But as we piece out the facts it is probable that John Daniel was a changed animal from the very hour that he left his home in London. There were days when he was much himself, especially when different members of the crew came to visit him. Some-

times a rope would be put between the bars with a man—often two of them—holding to it. When John was of a mind to play he had only to make what seemed the most nonchalant back-swing of an arm to drag them sliding across the deck. For though weighing under a hundred pounds his strength was appalling.

“Yet in spite of company he often became moody. At times he was seasick. He did not always sleep well and he frequently refused to play. He looked for the accustomed window that he might open it and look out. But the windows of his new room weren’t of that kind.”

Ben paused as though to choose his words.

“To my way of sizing up the layout,” he went on after a little, “this is rather important animal history I’m relating and I don’t want you to be carrying away a wrong twist on it. By that I mean that while I am aiming to give you what must have been John Daniel’s side of the transaction I don’t want you to get the impression that he was badly treated. For in the light of what was ordinarily known at the time he was given excellent care. Perhaps a better way to put it would be to say that he was given good care of the wrong brand. And though it may not be a pretty thing to admit, some animal or some two-legs—and too often a great number—have to be made the goats of ignorance

until by sacrificing enough of them we get wise to the fact that we're on a wrong tack. So viewing 1921 from up here in the present July it's plain to be seen that John Daniel, the First, was a phenomenon composed of part gorilla and part goat. Which is to say that he paid with his life for the experience which put men wise as to how to handle a gorilla, keep him fit on a sea voyage, and following that, make a healthy and contented trouser out of him.

"Still, to drive the staub home," Ben continued, "John the Martyr, as you might rightly call him, was treated as well as it was then supposed an animal should be treated. You or I, had we been animal men enough to have been trusted with the job, would like as not have done just what Benson did—probably not as well. And let it be recorded that whatever his mental state, John made port in fine physical condition and free from the seasickness that had bothered him earlier in the voyage.

"It was a clear, crisp morning when the *Old North State* docked—the morning of March twenty-second. Considering that John Daniel was one of the only three gorillas ever brought to the United States, and far and away the largest of the three, there were few people to meet him. Reporters and cameramen, of course, and men from the show. Also a motor truck to carry the crate and

its precious contents to the Garden. Wait; I've got some pictures here. They'll tell you that part of the story a lot better than I can."

Ben went to the back of the wagon and rummaged in his trunk. He took out a large manila envelope and returned to his seat beside John Foster.

"One of the camera boys gave them to me," he said as he dug into the envelope. "There—that's John Daniel as I first saw him."

They scanned the picture together.

"He looks frightened," John said.

"He was frightened," Ben answered with emphasis. "In fact if my conclusion is worth anything I'd say that during that first morning his reaction was a mixture of fear and resentment, with the resentment coming pretty close to anger at times. Notice his doubled fist? Well, I'm asking you not to smile when I say that whenever I look at it here in the picture I can't help but think that he's shaking that fist at whatever may be ahead of him. A coincidence, but there was surely a battle coming and John wasn't to be the first that ever lost one in the Old Garden.

"That picture," Ben went on, "was made between decks before the crate had been battened across the front for the trip from the pier. Here's one that was snapped just after the crate had been

hoisted through the hatch, and this third one shows the crate loaded on the truck."

They ceased talking to go over the pictures again.

"What John must have thought as he rumbled over the cobbles nobody can tell. But he finally reached the Garden and there he was shifted from the crate to the largest of the cages—one a good deal like Whitey now occupies out there in the menagerie. When he found himself in the changed quarters he didn't run and he didn't climb. He just went and lay down in one corner as though he was tired.

"A bed with blankets had been provided and in a little while he covered himself. It was some time before he ate and drank but when he did he became a bit more like what must have been his real self.

"Now with John Daniel's arrival in New York, we've come to the first of the last twenty-seven days of his life. These, except for the few hours when he was in a room on the Old Garden roof, were spent in the cage. The Garden engagement opened four days after his arrival and he died before the show left to go out under canvas. So his audiences were made up solely of those who saw him in New York.

"No animal before or since has ever attracted so much interest. John the Second, of whom I'll

tell you later on, had his days in Gotham, but after all he played second fiddle to John the First. Besides I've always thought that the first John was the finer animal of the two. There was more stuff in his eyes. Positive it is that with a lot of us who knew them both, he will always remain the favorite.

"Perhaps," Ben mused, "that was because the poor devil was so unhappy. For there was no driving around that fact. He'd get hold of himself at intervals and whenever children gathered in front of his cage you'd see him brighten up. But he gradually grew more and more morose. Sometimes he would sit for an hour or more in a far corner of his cage as though lost in thought. Have you ever seen someone, especially an old person, who has received a letter bringing sad news? And watched him sit thumbing the message? That picture often came to me as I watched John slumping in a corner and bent forward thumbing a piece of folded newspaper or a scrap of straw. Often at such times no amount of calling his name could make him look up. Or if he gave attention it would be to turn those blue-black eyes of his toward you as much as to say:

"'Who are you? What do you want? What can *you* do for me?'

"There's no romancing about this that I'm relating," Ben said. "Yes, I know that I like to pipe a bit

now and then as to what animals think—like what I was telling you about that Jennie elephant when she got shoved on a throne. But that's a different slant, as I'm judging you'll understand. For these are nothing but the gospelest of facts that I'm handing you about John Daniel. Maybe some day you'll have the luck to be around a gorilla and get to know one. Then you'll come nearer to my point of view.

"I've said that John never grabbed when he ate and in that connection I'm reminded of the times when his appetite ran to oranges. For he was like that: One day he would have a run on grapes and then, maybe, the next day he would be all for eggs. Following that he would take a whirl at another kind of food. If it was oranges they had to be peeled, then separated into the natural slices, and the slices laid in a row—one between every two bars along the front of the cage. This preparation would, at a guess, take something like five minutes; a point that I make to illustrate the animal's self-restraint. For during the whole time John would sit on the floor, patiently waiting until the last slice had been put in place. Or until the table was set, as you might say. Then he would come forward, and with a slowness that many humans might emulate, pick up and eat one slice. It eaten he would take another, and so on, one at a time until the last had been eaten. Then, not once but on a half dozen

different occasions, I have seen him reach through the bars and gently shove the attendant toward the box from which he knew the first orange had come. And while the second was being prepared he would once more resume his seat until the last slice was ready for him. I have seen him dine with this same deliberateness on as many as three oranges at a meal. Since he ate three you knew he was hungry for oranges. Take a chimp, an orang, or any other species of monk that I've ever seen and the resulting grabbing and gobbling would disgust you. But here was an animal that accepted service and did it with a dignity that to us who knew him was a never ceasing source of wonder."

"Did he eat a great deal?"

"Without being entirely certain on that point for the food was never measured, I'd say that he ate about the same quantity as a five-year-old human and drank twice as much water. At least he did on some days. But as time went on, or perhaps after the second week at the Garden, his appetite began gradually to fail. He'd snap back to normal and then relapse and each time the relapse would grow a little longer than the one before.

"In the hope of cheering him, his keeper was changed. New and willing enough hands took charge. But nobody was 'gorilla wise.' The keepers simply did the best they could. And there was al-

ways the belief that John would sooner or later adapt himself to his new way of living. We were always saying, 'John acts better to-day'; or, 'John ate good this afternoon; he'll be coming around pretty quick now'; and, 'Just wait until we get out under canvas. That will fix him up in no time.'

"Remembering that he was accustomed to a woman's care, one of the several changes in keepers put the wife of one of our performers in charge. Like the others, Flora Rittley did all she could to comfort the stranger. Then Mrs. Rittley and Roy Clark shared the job together.

"But still John failed. Suddenly on April 15th he took a turn that looked bad. It was then that he was removed from the cage and carried to a room in the Garden tower. At the same time a cable was sent to Miss Cunningham in London. I've got the wording of it here somewhere."

Ben sorted through the contents of the envelope which lay on his knees.

"This is it: 'John Daniel grieving for you. Can you come at once? Will deem it a privilege to pay all expenses. Answer.'

"And here," added Ben, "is the reply."

John read, "Am sailing on Celtic to-day."

"In the meantime John lay on a bed in the tower. Whether he welcomed the change would be hard to say. He stretched there or drawing up his knees

and pulling the blankets over his shoulder, turned his face to the wall. Relieved of all other duties, Roy Clark nursed him. The show's physician, Dr. Shields, prescribed medicine. Hot drinks and steaming cloths were applied and Roy tells me that John submitted without protest. Probably this in itself was a bad sign. As Roy will tell you he acted as though he'd finally given up the whole thing as a bad job.

"To quote Roy again, 'You couldn't have asked for a better patient. He stood for everything the doc told us to do.'

"Only once did he show resistance. That was when Roy tried to coddle him. He got hold of Roy's ear and started to twist. But when Roy said, 'No! No! Johnnie. Good boy—good boy, Johnnie!' he immediately relaxed his hold.

"That was on a Saturday morning with Miss Cunningham already on the high seas. Sunday he seemed better and drank some milk. As darkness came on he showed interest in an electric light bulb that was suspended by a cord from the ceiling. Roy made it swing back and forth and that seemed to please him. But only for a little while. He breathed with difficulty and after a time he turned his face to the wall. Roy tucked in the bedding. The breathing became more regular and as Roy says, he thinks he slept a little. Taking advantage of this, Roy



JOHN DANIEL

Above: "A picture of John Daniel's hand."



Left: "Notice the small ear and how closely it fits against the head."



"Thirty stories plus the height of the parapet above the floor of the biggest town on earth."



"Not fleas but only little particles of dried skin."

went across the roof to where Ollie Webb fed the working crew when we played the Old Garden, to get some coffee. He wasn't absent more than ten minutes but when he came back he found John uncovered and faced about. Near his mouth was a pool of blood. A hemorrhage had taken him and he was through."

"Poor fellow!" John said.

Ben nodded.

"Poor fellow," he repeated after him, "and believe me, lad, there's nothing babyish in having a funny feeling come up around your eyes when a thing like that happens. With an animal like John it's liable to hit you harder than when a human goes."

"But why didn't they take him out of the cage sooner?"

"A lot of people asked that same thing. Replying I'd say that in the first place nobody with the show realized that John was in as bad a way as he was until it was too late. Besides he was advertised in a big way and people coming to the Garden had the right to see him. As for being under the weather I've told you how a lot of animals get off their feed and yet are brought back onto it again. There's many a day when a human star would rather be in bed than working; but that's not the way of the circus. The show has got to go on. If you come back

at me with the argument that when it comes down to brass tacks the humans can choose and the caged animals can't, then we'll find ourselves up against the old question as to whether it's ever right to keep dumb brutes in captivity—whether we ought not to do away with all zoos and traveling menageries. But how many people are there who would go all their lives without ever seeing or studying a giraffe or a rhino, let alone a gorilla, if showmen did not bring them to them? It's a big question, John Foster. Maybe you'll live to see it settled though I doubt if the solution will come in my day. I'm too far along for that.

“To get back to John Daniel and looking at his case from but one of several angles: Miss Cunningham first cared for him and because of the time spent with her he walked on the flat of his feet far longer than any gorilla before him. That kept the foot bones spread out. Showman enterprise brought him to America. Here he died. Upon his death his body was given to the American Museum of Natural History and the College of Physicians and Surgeons at Columbia. From him several things were learned that science had not known before. Especially from John's feet and brain.

“Regarding the feet I can't give you the Latin for it but it seems that for a long time scientists had noted that certain bones were a lot like bones in the

human feet except that a curve existed as a result of traveling over rounded surfaces like uneven ground and the branches of trees. Now as John was taken in hand when a baby and persuaded to walk upright a good deal of the time over perfectly flat floors, these bones had gradually straightened so as to be much nearer like yours or mine.

"As to the brain," Ben went on, "it was found that John's, having developed under human contact, came even nearer the brain of a human than that of any other animal investigated. Taking 100 points as a standard of measurement it was estimated that the brain of a two-year-old child could be rated at 91; John Daniel's brain at 87; and that of a chimpanzee at $83\frac{1}{2}$."

"I suppose there are two sides to it," John Foster said.

"Just as there are to any question," Ben answered. "And we may be sure that John the Martyr did not live in vain. He made a double contribution: He taught those who keep captive animals a lesson in the better and different care of them, and he provided science with facts not before known. That's why in my opinion he deserves to be remembered equally as much as many a human whose statue you'll see in parks or other public places."

"But of course there isn't any statue to him, is there?" John asked.

“Not in any of the parks, but some day when you go to New York make it a point to visit the Museum of Natural History. There you’ll see John himself. I can’t say that he’s as natural as life, for nobody could reproduce those blue-black eyes of his. Still, in other respects the thing that stands there is John Daniel, helpful to man even in death since unlike human martyrs he has furnished most of the material for his own statue.”

CHAPTER XX

JOHN THE HAPPY

WE HURDLE a couple of years now," Ben related as he began the story of John Daniel the Second. "On this side of the water John the First had been mounted, made the subject of lectures, and then, I'm afraid, pretty much forgotten.

"Meantime, over in London there was another gorilla youngster which Miss Cunningham had secured from the Congo region. She named him Sultan and reared him much as she had reared John Daniel until by reason of accustoming him to human associations, excursions into near-by parks, and riding in motor cars, she felt confident that he was ready to cross the Atlantic and go on tour. Negotiations with this in view had been going on for some time and during the winter of '23 it was arranged that John's successor should join the show at the Garden the following spring.

"Thus it came about that on March 28, 1924, a second gorilla sailed out of Southampton for New

York. As I've said, his name was Sultan; but because of the large amount of publicity that had been given John Daniel, the big bosses decided that it would be good showmanship to call the new acquisition John Daniel the Second. And since he later became famous throughout the country by that name it will probably be as well if you and I dispense with the name Sultan and hereafter refer to him by the name under which he was billed.

"So John the Second started voyaging. But there was as much difference between his steamer accommodations and those handed John the First as there is between a star's dressing tent and this wagon. Instead of being freighted in a crate, John the Second traveled in a stateroom of the palatial Hamburg American liner *Deutschland*. His fare was that of a first-class passenger. His companions in the stateroom were Miss Cunningham and a woman friend who assisted her in looking after his wants and in keeping him amused throughout the voyage.

"Not that John the Second was in any sense a stunt animal—not one whit more so than John the First. Like the latter he had been brought up only along lines of good behavior, Miss Cunningham making every effort to develop nothing but natural traits. In so far as was possible in the smaller quarters, John had the same freedom on shipboard as he

had enjoyed at Miss Cunningham's home in London. Best of all he had her companionship.

"Except for a brief attack of seasickness he stood the voyage better than many of the passengers. And when the *Deutschland* docked there was no crate to be swung from between decks and no motor truck standing by to receive it. Instead John the Second was carried across an upper gangplank in Miss Cunningham's arms to a waiting limousine.

"Naturally enough," Ben went on, "the animal was likely to attract attention and to avoid possible confusion the car had been parked at the foot of one of the pier freight elevators. Only one of our boys was present when the party got out of the elevator but he's told me that what happened then caused him to suppose that John the Second was a gone monk—and the show only just in receipt of him.

"For as Miss Cunningham stepped out she let John down from her arms so that he might walk by her side, just as I afterward saw him do a hundred times. Now whether it was the sight of the big black car that bothered him or just plain deviltry, I don't know. But no sooner had he got his feet on the concrete than he jerked his hand from Miss Cunningham's and was gone around one corner of the elevator shaft!

"Now you're expecting me to say that she started after him," Ben guessed. "But she didn't. She didn't

even look back. Instead she calmly made for the waiting car.

"‘All right,’ she called over one shoulder. ‘Good-bye, Sultan. Good-bye!’

"And they say it would have handed anybody a laugh to have seen John hotfooting it after her. In fifteen seconds he was on the running board, through the door, and into her lap!

"John Foster," Ben said, "that woman certainly did know her monk. She surely did know him. She knew that he looked to her for all things—food, play, coddling—everything. Not that he ever strayed very far at any time; but when he did he always came home.

"But, to get on, a quick drive soon brought the party to the McAlpin Hotel, where a suite had been engaged. Touching on that, a lot of folks thought it was a press agent stunt. It wasn't. It was stipulated in the contract that John should first be taken to quarters that would be something similar in roominess to what he was used to in London. For following the more cramped quarters on the steamer Miss Cunningham believed that to be a necessary provision. She wanted a place where he could turn somersaults, open and close windows and doors, and romp as long as he wanted to romp. And the powers agreed. The lesson had from John the First had sunk in.

"Twenty or so of us—newspaper men, Carl Akeley, the big-game hunter, camera men, etc., had followed on to the hotel. There we gathered in knots in the hallway on John's floor until it would be convenient for Miss Cunningham to admit us.

"It was," Ben avowed, "for all the world like a group of underlings waiting an audience with some royal potentate. As we talked of what we had already glimpsed of the arrival we faced the door that led to where John was. Suddenly there came a movement of the knob.

" 'Miss Cunningham,' somebody said.

"Then the door swung inward. But instead of the mistress there stood John himself! With one hand still holding the knob, his feet spread apart and body erect he remained as fixed as a statue for perhaps the quarter of a minute, staring at us.

" 'There,' said Carl Akeley, 'stands the living thing that is nearer to man than anything else.'

"Then a quick back leap, a bang that made the knob rattle, and John had slammed the door in our face!

"Of all my recollections of John the Second," Ben declared, "that first view of him remains the most vivid. I've often wondered if there wasn't something symbolic in the happening: Curious man with his eyes on a blank door, that door swing-

ing open, a glimpse of a jungle mystery, and then—the closed door.

“But there wasn’t time for speculating just then for a few minutes later Miss Cunningham had invited us inside. Had you been there you would have seen another strange picture: A room crowded and overflowing with interviewers, with John Daniel now perched in Miss Cunningham’s arms, now perched on a chair top, and she answering the rounds of questions volleyed at her.

“John had callers off and on all that day and more of them the next afternoon. Usually they found him sitting in a window watching the traffic which streamed back and forth a dozen stories below. He never tired of doing that.”

“But where was the circus?” John Foster asked.

“At Madison Square Garden and going full tilt. But Miss Cunningham had insisted upon supervising the quarters that were being built there. Besides she wanted to be dead certain that John had plenty of holiday between the end of the voyage and the time he started to troupe.

“‘You must not think me silly, you know, but we must first get him to like it here,’ she said in explanation.

“One of the ways was to take John out of doors. So the second day following his arrival being fine

and warm she carried him to the McAlpin roof to play. And now we'll dig into this envelope again for it was there that some pictures were taken that are probably the greatest ever made of a gorilla."

Ben sorted through a half dozen photographs.

"No trouble to get them," he said. "No, sir, you didn't have to ask John to watch the little birdie. I'm here to announce that he was as easy to handle as a candidate for Congress. Look at this corking head."

They consulted it together.

"Notice the small ear and how closely it fits against the head? Take a chimp which is the next monk in intelligence and you'll find ear enough to make two of John's. This picture also shows his coat as well as any photograph could—dark brown verging on black and flecked all through with silver.

"Here we've got a picture of John Daniel's hand. Those holding it open are Miss Cunningham's. A lot of difference in the color, and John's thumb is shorter and less developed. But measure the fingers. Almost exactly the same in length.

"Now wait a second—wait until you see a picture that I've got of a chimp's hand. Here it is. Study the two side by side."

"The chimpanzee's whole hand is longer," John

decided after he had compared them. "The biggest finger looks as long as the palm."

"The whole mitt is skinnier," Ben pointed out, "while John's hand is a lot wider as compared with its length. Same way with the feet. The gorilla has shorter toes. And, of course, no tail.

"And now we come to what to my way of thinking is the greatest animal picture ever snapped. What's more it was made at what was likely enough the most dramatic moment in John's whole career."

Ben laid the picture face down and paused to re-light his pipe and flip the burned-out match through the open door.

"You'll bear in mind that all this picture taking was happening on the McAlpin roof. It was a flat deck we were on and seemingly miles above Broadway. Along the edge ran a parapet probably four feet high. Scattered here and there were iron-topped tables and benches, and it was on one of these or in Miss Cunningham's lap that John Daniel had been seated while posing for full fronts, profiles, and the like. Now you couldn't have asked to see an animal fuller of git and go so that it was plain enough he was all for a tear rather than picture taking. Yet he behaved like a major.

"But once school was out he was off across the deck at a two-forty gait—on benches and over them, sometimes on his hind feet but mostly on all fours.

Soon he made for the parapet, half vaulted and half climbed to the top rail, and took hold of a heavy iron pipe that stuck skyward from it.

"‘There’s a picture for you!’ someone called to the photographers.

"No two ways about that and yet it wasn’t anything compared to what John gave us ten seconds later. For with a quick movement he pushed clear of the pipe, stood upright, and looking out over the city began beating upon his chest! Just as you’re seeing him at this moment.

"There," Ben said as he held the picture at arm’s length. "There was a sight! Thirty stories plus the height of the parapet above the floor of the biggest town on earth we were watching with open mouths an animal that men had fought their way through African jungles to see. Not only that but we were listening to the strange thudding sound called ‘drumming’ which Theodore Roosevelt tells of hearing though without, as I remember, ever catching sight of a gorilla.

"The thing didn’t last longer than it would take you to count twenty, and at a call from Miss Cunningham John was back in her arms.

"‘He likes New York,’ she laughed. ‘Yes, I have long ago discovered that when he is pleased he is quite apt to show it by drumming on his chest.’"

"Was it a very loud sound?" John asked.

"Pretty much what you would hear if a deep chested man should beat against himself with open palms. If anything a little deeper than that. I heard it many times later on and always at unexpected moments. Sometimes John would drum sitting down but more often when standing. And it was always a good omen—a sort of barometer on health and a contented monk. The drumming of John the Happy.

"The following day John began his engagement at the Garden. With Miss Cunningham in attendance he was exhibited from a vantage point just in front of a door that led into a room. It was in this retiring room that he had his afternoon naps once the crowd had left the menagerie to see the ring performance. The snoozing over with he'd play a bit, have something to eat, and then be brought out again in time to be on hand following the races. Between shows he was always taken for a drive. Sometimes he sat in Miss Cunningham's lap but his favorite position was to stand in the seat and to peer out of the back window. If a morning was fine the car would go to some remote part of Central Park and John would stroll or even climb a tree or two. But he never ran away nor did he have an hour of sickness at the Garden."

"Did he sleep there nights?"

"Not a bit of it. To tell the truth he fared better

than most of us with the show. We walked; but John's car was always waiting to take him to his hotel. Not to the McAlpin after a little but to one more convenient to the Garden.

"As I've said," Ben continued, "there was widespread interest in the visitor and at least one experiment that was as amusing as it was instructive. That was the morning when John was taken to the experimental studio at the American Museum, the idea being to get his reaction to the figures of John Daniel the First and those of several adult gorillas that had been shot in Africa and set up at the museum.

"Big folks present, too; like Dr. Yerkes, of the National Research Council in Washington; Dr. Gregory from Columbia University, and Dr. McGregor and Carl Akeley of the Museum. There were the savants and there were the stuffed gorillas, when in comes John with Miss Cunningham. And what does John do? He moseys around for possibly half a minute, takes a passing sniff at one or two of his adult relatives, pays no attention whatsoever to John the First, and then starts to play with a little boy who's present. From then on his chief interest centered on the child.

"Now I'm not saying that his eyes didn't take in the stuffed bodies but everyone was certain that

they didn't mean anything more to him than so many wash tubs. As Carl Akeley remarked:

"'You can't fool an animal. All he got when he sniffed was the odor of plaster of Paris or perhaps the chemicals used in preserving the hide.'

"In other words," Ben went on, "there was no animal smell left in the things that stood there. From that you might hazard the guess that even animals of the highest intelligence depend very little on their eyes provided they can first bring the nose into action. Their sense of smell decides and if it doesn't register then the decision that the thing smelled is not animal is so final that the mere shape and form of the thing carries little or no weight whatever.

"But then I doubt if the docs present had expected any other outcome along that particular line. What they were most interested in was in watching John in action, in noting the flatness of the foot that they had found so well developed in John the First, and the use and movements of the hands, arms, and muscles."

"Do you think that we were like gorillas once upon a time?" John asked.

"That," declared Ben with finality, "is something on which I don't care to speculate because I don't know anything about it. But if you're starting to suspect that trying to establish that idea was the

purpose of the experiment I've been telling about, I'd say you are dead wrong. For if one who's nothing more than a doddering old lot rat, but who's often been hanging around when different profs. have been discussing monks, won't be accused of speaking out of turn, I'd say this: The real men in the game aren't trying to 'prove' anything. All they're aiming at is to find out what is and what isn't. So proceeding along that premise they're not for dodging facts either right or left or for or against a proposition. The trouble with a lot of folks is that as soon as they hear about some doc who's investigating gorillas and suchlike, they hop to the conclusion that he's got all the hook-rope teams and all the working elephants known to science into harness with the sole idea of proving that somewhere along about seven hundred granddads back our grandpappy climbed trees and threw coconuts at his mother-in-law. Why——

"But there," Ben broke off, "I wasn't meaning to stage a harangue. And so to get back to John Daniel, he finished the Garden engagement in a blaze of glory and went out with us under canvas. Except for a couple of colds which he wrestled out of without much trouble, I'd say he was livelier on the road than he had been in New York. He had a stateroom on the last section and like any human star with the show he didn't have to get up until

noon if he didn't want to. Mostly, however, he was awake early and would sit at his window and watch the scenery slide by. And he was always sure to be there when the train pulled into the show stand. Sometimes when the townner kids would gather around he would fold his arms and lean with his nose pressed against the glass to watch them. I've got a picture of that somewhere here."

Once again Ben rummaged in the envelope.

"A little dim, John being in the shadow, but you can make him out."

"Of course I can," John said. "Was that his stateroom?"

"All that would be just back of the two windows where he is. Miss Cunningham's was where you see the other windows though of course there was a door connecting the two.

"On the road," Ben went on, "John rode to and from the lot in a taxi and continued to have his regular spins between shows. Without having counted them, I'd say that there are a hundred or more trees throughout the United States that are correctly entitled to hang out a shingle reading, 'I was once climbed by a gorilla.'

"Among the showfolks he had his special favorites and nothing pleased him more than to untie a friend's shoe lace. Once when he was brought to the back yard here he fell hard for the clowns and re-

membering that most monks are attracted by bright colors I'm thinking that that was because of their make-up.

"All in all John trouped a matter of fourteen thousand miles, was seen in a hundred and thirty-seven different show stands, visited twenty-seven states, and closed his season when the show did at Greensboro, North Carolina, on November third. Then he sailed back to England."

"And where is he now?" John asked.

"Dead. He didn't die until some months after reaching London but dead just the same at around four years of age. Which gives you something else on which to speculate. Will a gorilla last only about that long anywhere outside the jungles? As they grow out of babyhood does the coddling and attention that means so much when they're punks get to be the wrong thing? Miss Cunningham once told me that she believed that she could have handled John for several years to come. But that, of course, was only a guess.

"Just the same," Ben concluded, "John the Second will go down in history as the first gorilla to have toured any country, as the one that lived far longer in captivity than any other, and as the first to give any considerable number of people in widely separated territory an opportunity to see what a live gorilla looks like. And that last is an

important item for folks have too often supposed they were viewing a gorilla when what they saw was nothing more than a big chimpanzee or an orang-outang."

As Ben finished speaking a distant clock began striking the hour.

"Whillikers! Eleven already! I guess I'd better be getting to the station."

"Got to go, eh?"

"Yes, I said in the telegram to Dad that I'd be home this afternoon. Wish I could stay right through."

"Well, nobody would object to that," Ben returned. "But on the other hand you've got something to look forward to the next time you shovel in. Even then you won't get it all. I've been loafing around show animals for years on end and never prowl a cat house without turning up a new find. Besides there was the whirl into Africa just after I——"

He did not finish, but started to replace the envelope in his trunk; then stopped.

"Say, would you like to borrow these pictures for a spell?"

"I should say I would!"

"All right—take them along. No hurry about getting them back. You can mail them to me when you're through. Here, I'll scribble the address."

They had climbed down from the wagon and getting the stub of a pencil from his pocket Ben rested the envelope on a wheel as he wrote.

"That will reach me."

"You surely have been fine to me," John said. "I never could have got anything like what I have if you hadn't been so good telling me about things."

"Forget it, lad. Though if you ever write up some of the stuff you might send me a copy."

"Indeed, I will! And if you wouldn't mind I'd like—well, I'd like to say more about who it was that helped me out so much. I mean all your name, Mr. Ben. Or maybe you would tell me more of what you started to say about being in Africa."

But Ben only shook his head.

"No," he said. "Now you're shoveling the wrong way. Nobody would be interested in that."

He struck a match on the broad tire against which he had been leaning.

"Well, you mustn't miss your train. So-long to you, old excavator. It's been good sport digging around with you. Luck."

He turned and made off in the direction of the back door. John stood watching until he was lost to view in the big top, then tucking the envelope under one arm he walked rapidly toward Michigan Boulevard. As he neared the edge of the lot he saw a

familiar figure stooped down, plucking handfuls of grass.

"You go away now?" Andrew asked as John stopped to bid him good-bye. "But you come back again sometime and then maybe I got George trained for do act."

"I will," John promised, "and see all the pets, too."

"Naw, no pets," Andrew declared with much earnestness. "Leedle devils no good. I t'ink I kill all next veek. Not good for nothing only eat, eat, eat—all time eat."

A declaration which caused John's face to break into a grin that lasted until he was well over the Seventh Street bridge.

THE END

